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TWO ADMIRALS

SIR FAIRFAX MORESBY AND HIS SON, JOHN MORESBY



F. Lord Napier

TWO ADMIRALS

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET SIR FAIRFAX MORESBY, G.C.B., K.M.T., D.C.L.

(1786-1877)

AND HIS SON, JOHN MORESBY

A RECORD OF LIFE AND SERVICE IN THE BRITISH NAVY FOR A HUNDRED YEARS

BY ADMIRAL JOHN MORESBY

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
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TO

MY GRANDSON,

FAIRFAX DONALD MACKESON,

NAVAL CADET, R.N.

"FEAR GOD. HONOUR THE KING"

PREFACE

THESE gleanings from my father's life, and reminiscences of my own, could not have appeared without the collaboration of my daughter, Lily Moresby (Mrs. Hodgkinson), whose literary skill and judgment have given this volume whatever charm it may possess.

To Edward Heawood, Esq., Librarian, and the other officers of the Royal Geographical Society, I am deeply indebted for their courtesy and cordial assistance in preparing Torres' map, and for translations from the Spanish *Boletin* for 1878.

My thanks are due to the Editors of the *National Review*, *Cornhill*, *Wide World*, and other magazines, for permission to reproduce articles which have appeared in their pages. I am also indebted to the reminiscences of a junior officer, who sailed with my father in the *Menai*.

A tribute must be paid to the memory of my cousin, Frederick Gifford, whose keen sense of humour represented the lighter side of naval life in several sketches reproduced in this volume. I am much indebted to his daughter, Mrs. Shepherd, who has so kindly permitted me to use them, and also to my brother, M. F. Moresby,

for his effective sketches. Last, but not least, I heartily thank Admiral of the Fleet Sir Nowell Salmon, V.C., and other old shipmates, who have recalled to my memory incidents omitted in the diary which, for the greater part of my life, I have carefully kept. The illustrations in the main represent scenes or persons actually described in the book, but a few others have been added, not for their artistic merit, but as showing some of the common incidents of a sailor's life fifty or sixty years ago, and consequently illustrating the spirit, if not the actual text, of these reminiscences.

With the hope that this record (which glances at a hundred years of family service in the greatest and noblest of Navies) may have a prosperous voyage, I knock the dog-shores away, and launch it on unknown waters.

JOHN MORESBY.

March, 1909.

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ADMIRAL MORESBY

CHAPTER I

MY FATHER

"Nobly, nobly Cape St. Vincent to the north-west died away,
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay.
Bluish 'mid the burning water full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar grand and grey;
'Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?' say,
Whoso turns as I this evening, turn to God to praise and pray."

BROWNING.

If this book were my father's biography, I should launch his history with assured success as describing a type and example of the naval officer of the early nineteenth century, trained in a hard school, wise and resourceful, stern and generous. His career, from the close of the eighteenth century until 1878 (when he died an Admiral of the Fleet, G.C.B., a D.C.L. of Oxford, and Knight of Maria Theresa, with a barony of the Austrian Empire), would in itself form a record full of interest; but, like the majority of officers of his day, when he compared his services in comparatively junior rank with those of the giants who had preceded him at the Nile, St. Vincent, and Trafalgar, he felt they were scarcely worth remembrance, and thus he has left nothing but the slenderest outline of his

work. Yet he was one of the ablest of the generation of "Admirals All" who helped so materially to give the *coup de grâce* to the French pretensions to European autocracy.

My grandfather (who afterwards was lieutenant-colonel of the Stafford Militia, and commanded the Lichfield Volunteers) was in India with his family at the time of my father's birth, having already shaken the pagoda-tree to some purpose. Fairfax Moresby was born at Calcutta in 1787, and was descended from the Moresbys of Moresby, a family of ancient honour in Cumberland. He was thus inheritor of some of the best blood in England, a stock Scandinavian originally, toughened by centuries of Border warfare, tempered in the clash of Agincourt and Bannockburn, and possessed of an inspiring tradition almost coeval with English history. It is not wonderful that this should influence an unusually sensitive boyhood. It certainly did so in more ways than one.

My excuse for allusion to these particulars is the universal interest of the silent, invisible touches, from hands long since dust, that mould individuality, and therefore shape the present. I have always considered my father's temperament (so far as a son can judge) a remarkable compound of high idealism and an almost romantic gallantry, subdued by a devotion to the practical side of duty, with its cold and sometimes repellent details, that it would be difficult to surpass. And there is much in his family history to account for these characteristics.

His childhood was spent at Stow House, Lichfield. At his preparatory school he had as schoolfellow the future statesman Sir Robert Peel. The boys were of the same age, and there was much friendly rivalry in

games and work. In arithmetic my father kept ahead; in all other subjects the order was reversed by the keen brain that was to do such good service hereafter to the country.

It is strange how the magic of the sea lays hold of the young Englishman to whom all her siren voices are as yet unknown.

> "A boy's will is the wind's will,
> And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Far inland as his home was, all his predilections were for the seafaring life, and in the long summer his delight was to lie concealed in the waving grass, watching its billowing with half-shut eyes, until, seeing only the blue sky and undulating green, he could imagine himself on the lonely ocean, far out of sight of land, in the centre of circling horizons.

The realisation of his dream came with the offer from a neighbour and friend, Captain William Parker (then in acting command of the *Volage* frigate) of a berth on board, and acceptance was a foregone conclusion. There was never a moment's hesitation.

The *Volage* was in the West Indies, so, pending the opportunity of joining her, he was sent on board the *London*, of 98 guns, as an A.B.—or able seaman—a curious and common custom in those days, when captains were permitted to enter their relatives and friends as A.B., ordinary seamen, or other rates. Captain Parker had himself been entered as captain's servant! The object in view was not only the pay, but the fact that when a boy became a midshipman in due course, he could already reckon two or three years' service (as the case might be) to his credit—this counting later on for promotion.

One glimpse only of his initiatory experience remains, but that a significant one. He was ushered—a little trembling lad—into the midshipmen's mess, a dismal den in the cockpit, where the air was stagnant and the guttering dips made a sorry apology for daylight. Here awaited him several elderly frowsy men ranking as master's mates; on the opposite side was the purser's storeroom, where there happened at the moment to be an unguarded bottle of rum. Such a treasure could not remain unnoticed, and the first order in the service that my father received was to steal it for the benefit of his elders. So, all unwittingly, his introduction was signalised by a theft—a small indication of the indescribable vice and unclean living of the time, stigmatised by the great St. Vincent as "horrible scenes of profligacy." This callous profligacy was the outcome of many circumstances which will not be unfamiliar to readers of Smollett (though he dealt with a much earlier period), and even of Marryat. It died hard, for forty-four years later my own first experiences were not dissimilar; but it is gone, and my main object in recording it is to accentuate the difference between past and present, and the progress of lower deck, gun-room, and ward-room alike to cleaner and more wholesome ideals. Fortunately, some weeks later the *London* joined the squadron under Sir John Borlase Warren for an expedition against Ferrol, where six Spanish ships lay ready for sea, under the protection of the forts. Here, in an engagement with the enemy, he received his baptism of fire, and also the incalculable benefit of service so arduous that it left little time and opportunity for the persecutions of the baser sort in the midshipmen's mess.

This atmosphere was finally escaped when he was

passed on as a midshipman to the crack frigate *Amazon*, attached to the Channel Squadron. Her captain, William Parker, who even then was one of Nelson's most trusted frigate captains, afterwards won a baronetcy, and became the most distinguished Admiral of his day. Incredible as it may now seem, Parker was a lad of nineteen. Such cases were not then uncommon, and this especial one was owing to a near relationship to Lord St. Vincent.

It occasioned an odd dilemma when courts-martial were the order of the day, for by naval law every captain present was bound to sit as a member, whilst by the law of the land the presence of an infant rendered the proceedings of the court illegal. The problem was solved by detaching the *Amazon* from the fleet when necessary, and sending her to sea. Captain Parker, though he might be an infant, was an uncommonly strict disciplinarian (the young being ever the severest judges), and no lapses from duty were allowed on board. Twice my father was disrated to A.B. for faults doubtless deserving punishment, made a plain top-man, and obliged to leave the midshipmen's mess. But the captain of the top—a fine sailor of the old type—stood his friend, always respectful, but firm in teaching him his duty.

My father was accustomed to say that thus he learnt practical seamanship, but in too hard a school. His spirit was embittered and his young self-respect wounded, and he therefore came to the desperate resolution to desert.

Many weeks he watched for his chance, with a beating heart but fixed determination, and at last it came when the *Amazon* was refitting at Portsmouth. He left the boat he was in charge of, and set out on a

hopeless tramp to Cosham, uncertain alike of his means and his end, very frightened, very miserable, when a friendly voice hailed him on the road, and there stood Captain Vansittart, of *La Fortunée* frigate, before the forlorn little wanderer. With tactful kindness he elicited the whole story and persuaded the boy to return, promising to obtain his pardon from Captain Parker. What exactly passed between them my father never knew, but all was forgiven, and before Captain Vansittart left the port he took him to his own cabin, and, giving him a small pocket Bible, bade him make it his guide through all the difficulties of life. That Bible my father kept and loved to his dying day, treasuring it with the memory of the giver's wise and helpful kindness at a critical moment.

Henceforward his service in the *Amazon* became pleasant, and it is very possible that the boy captain may also have had a word of counsel from one so well qualified to give it.

My father was constantly in charge of prizes—a thrilling adventure not open to the junior officers of these peaceful days—and in one of them he was captured and taken prisoner to Malaga. There he was quartered on a Spanish merchant, who rejoiced in an only daughter, gazelle-eyed, silken-haired, beautiful as an houri. The almost inevitable consequences followed, and when a few months later, by the intervention of the immortal Nelson, his exchange was effected, there were two hearts to whom release promised no unmixed joy, so that the Spaniard, thinking more of his daughter than of the national feuds, offered her hand and the succession to his prosperous business to the young Englishman if he would stay in Spain. But duty won the day, and love was vanquished; and

surely a high reward was in store, for shortly after he rejoined, the *Amazon* was ordered to sail with Nelson's fleet in pursuit of Villeneuve to the West Indies. Not the utmost flight of fancy can realize the privilege it was then held to serve under the command of the greatest of sailors and most beloved of men. My heart still warms when I recall my father's tones in speaking of a joy which combined in itself patriotism and hero-worship. It did not need his glorious death to convey to Nelson's officers what manner of man they obeyed and loved. Neglected he might be by the Admiralty, forgotten (when no transcendent service was needed) by politicians, but sailors themselves, from the youngest boy to the great Collingwood (his friend and almost equal), knew that on the sea he was supreme, and that in him England's honour and future safely reposed.

It was a grim and anxious cruise—ten sail of the line pursuing eighteen, with a steadfast determination to bring them to battle. At Barbadoes Nelson was reinforced by two line-of-battle ships, and there, misled by a false report that Villeneuve was attacking Trinidad, he made what speed he might for that island. Reaching the Gulf of Para, he summoned his captains for council on board the *Victory*. My father accompanied Captain Parker as midshipman of his boat, carrying some official papers, with which he followed him to the poop, where Nelson, very eager and alert, as he described him, was awaiting his officers. They gathered round him, and, pointing to the island, he said:

"The French fleet is probably there. They have eighteen sail of the line. The *Victory* will take three; *Canopus*, *Spartiate*, and *Belleisle* will take two each,

and the rest of you one apiece. Now, gentlemen, the fleets are equal!"

That was Nelson, eager as a lover, when—

> "The enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
> And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker over the foam."

Yet it must not be supposed that this forecast of his was not based upon material facts, for whilst Villeneuve had no three-decker to balance against the *Victory*, Nelson had in addition the *Canopus* and *Spartiate* (two Nile prizes). Of these, the first was 100 tons larger than the *Victory*, and the other nearly equal in tonnage and weight of metal. The *Belleisle* was also an 80-gun ship, and could be classed with the other two. Therefore, from this point of view, Nelson's fleet was more equal to Villeneuve's than the one which he commanded at the Nile had been to that of Brueys, a fact apparently not considered by the naval historian James and others, who, counting line-of-battle ships only, have thought Nelson foolhardy in his desire to bring Villeneuve into action.

His captains left, inspired with the belief that what their great chief commanded they could achieve; and, indeed, never a man could so inform others with his own spirit. The principal and incommunicable secret of the "Nelson touch" was that for the moment that fine flame lit an answering fire in every heart, and each man who served under his orders was a Nelson, until it died out and left him common clay once more.

The *Amazon* returned with Nelson to England, and my father was made a lieutenant into the *Hibernia*, flying the flag of Lord St. Vincent in the Channel.

He had a characteristic story of the grim old chief at whose table he was once dining, a midshipman being

another guest. The dinner was served on silver plate, and the boy, not too well fed in his own mess, and anxious not to lose a drop of the rich gravy, was chasing it French fashion round the plate with his knife, when a terrible voice shouting "Pig! pig!" and the stern eye of the host fixed on the scratched silver, made the horrified lad drop the knife and fork with a clatter that startled everyone into silence.

Another of his recollections was his first presentation at Court by Sir Robert Peel (father of the great statesman) in 1806.

When my father got into the high-built barouche, with unpowdered hair and no queue, both being then *de rigueur*, the astonished old Baronet could only exclaim: "You d——d young rascal! what d'ye mean by this? Be off and get your hair powdered!" However, the explosion over, his wrath was appeased, and my father was presented in due course and without accident or queue—perhaps because the nearly blind old King failed to notice innovations so revolutionary.

From the *Hibernia* my father removed to the *Kent*, 74, stationed in the Gulf of Genoa, where he found opportunities of coming to the front. But amid sterner memories one is preserved of a little friend dear to all the crew. The following is the story as found amongst my father's papers:

JACK THRUSH, THE "KENT'S" PET.

1810.

"The 4th of June, 1810, was a day to be lamented as the last of a favourite thrush, beloved by all the crew of H.M.S. *Kent*.

"The news of poor Jack's decease was brought to Lieut. Moresby just as he was giving the last rub of

pipeclay to his lapels in honour of the King's birthday. Doubtless, the Poet-Laureate had an Ode cut and dried for the occasion, and this occurring to the lieutenant's mind, he said, 'I have yet five minutes to spare, and Jack shall have his Ode too.' No sooner said than done. But it may not be amiss first to give a short account of the subject of his verse. Jack Thrush was brought on board the *Kent* when scarcely fledged, and for years his song cheered the weary seamen when struggling with the tempests in the Gulf of Lyons. During a battle fought against the batteries of the town of Fréjus, at the foot of the Maritime Alps, a cannon-ball shattered Jack's cage, when he immediately flew on the stern rail, and whilst the combat raged loudest, regaled the crew with his shrillest note. On another occasion he was knocked into the sea. A sailor jumped overboard, and, that he might convey Jack safely to the ship, placed him on his head. There he sang his song of gratitude, which in tempest or calm he continued till the 4th of June, 1810, when he was committed to the waves at two bells during the salute fired in honour of the King's birthday by 25 sail of the line.

"No more will poor Jack sing his heart-cheering lay,
For the tyrant of all things has seized him this day.
The day that for England is joyous and glad
To the crew of the *Kent* must be mournful and sad.
In the changes of life little Jack had his part,
When the battle roared loud scarcely fluttered his heart,
And brave, though a thrush, would he sing while we fought,
And grateful his song when from death he was caught.
Should noise of the cannon this day meet my ear,
'Stead of joy for its sound I will drop the sad tear.
'Mid the general thunder I bid thee farewell,
And the guns of the *Kent* shall betoken thy knell.

"Fairfax Moresby,
"Lieut. H.M.S. *Kent*, 1810."

The poetry may not be first-rate, but the intention at all events was excellent. A curious and interesting

volume might be written on naval pets and the stirring events in which they have borne a part.

From this time his experiences of war service were many and varied. His letter-books, now yellow with age, afford a stirring picture of his life of gallant adventure. No duty seems to have come amiss to the young naval officer of the period. Sometimes it was guarding British shipping along the perilous ocean routes where the French were lying in wait. One day it would be: "The Bashaw of Tripoli is desirous of protection being afforded to a Maltese vessel in which is embarked a princess affianced to the Emperor of Morocco. You are hereby required and directed to take this vessel under your charge." And the princess is scarcely safely disposed of when an order follows to give chase to French privateers, and on the heels of this another to protect Canning's despatches conveyed in a ship delightfully named *Confounder*, and through it and behind it all is the ceaseless harrying of the French by land and ocean, which was then the goal and crown of every Englishman's ambition, as three centuries earlier it had been the aim of Elizabeth's sea-dogs to hound the Spaniard off the waterways.

In 1808 he was employed with the boats of the *Kent* and the *Wizard* to cut out a convoy of deeply laden vessels at Noli, anchored under the protection of a shore battery, field-pieces, and regular troops. He led the attack, and with the utmost success; for, in spite of a valiant resistance and heavy loss of life, the whole convoy and gunboat were captured and brought out. In consequence of this and similar brilliant services he was made commander in 1811, and was given command of the *Wizard*, 18-gun brig. Within a

year he had captured two large French privateers and sixty merchant vessels, besides suppressing the fierce pirates of the Greek Archipelago, and for this service he was awarded a sword of honour of the value of a hundred guineas by the Maltese merchants, who had peculiar reason to value it. From Malta the *Wizard* joined the squadron of Rear-Admiral Fremantle, then co-operating in the Adriatic with the Austrians in the recapture of the important positions held by the French at Trieste and elsewhere. Whilst the squadron under the Admiral was occupied on the east coast of the Adriatic he was detached in the *Wizard*, and placed in command of a naval brigade of 200 seamen and marines on the banks of the Po, where he repulsed after a hard fight a division of French troops 1,000 strong who endeavoured to advance on Trieste.

Afterwards, joined by a few Austrian troops, he frequently attacked with success superior numbers of the redoubtable French soldiers, his capabilities as a soldier receiving as high praise from General Count Nugent as his sailorly achievements did from his naval commander, who wrote to him at the same time:

"DEAR MORESBY,

"You are worth your weight in gold. I am always safe where you are."

The aim was to check the progress of Napoleon's step-son, Eugène Beauharnais, Viceroy of Italy, who was then advancing on the right bank of the Po to raise the siege of Trieste. After distinguishing himself in various operations, my father volunteered his services, and, being placed in command of the boats of his own ship and those of two others, landed under

a heavy fire of round shot and musketry, and stormed and destroyed two strong batteries at the entrance of the Boea de Cattaro. Then, crossing the Adriatic to the mouth of the Po, he found, on the military road by which Eugène Beauharnais was advancing to relieve Trieste, the fort of Magna Vacca garrisoned by French troops, and at once realising its importance, he captured and held it, thus compelling the French army to make a long détour, and securing the Austrian position. During the subsequent siege of Trieste he served on shore in command of one of the batteries, and was then ordered to form one with four 32-pounders within breaching distance, and this was so successfully carried out that the capitulation of the town quickly followed, and Austria regained her freedom from Napoleon's domination.

For these services the Emperor of Austria conferred on the young commander (the only one of his rank ever thus honoured) the Order of Maria Theresa, carrying with it an hereditary barony of the Austrian Empire. From the great Lord Exmouth, Commander-in-Chief, he received the following letter:

"H.M.S. *Caledonia*,
"*June* 29, 1814.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"You need not fear my missing any opening to give you your rank. You have fought hard for it and deserve it. Your absence will not interfere with it, and if any invalid vacancy happens at Malta, you have my sanction to request it as standing first on the Admiralty list.

"Yours,
"EXMOUTH."

This recognition, which gratified him even more than the Austrian Order, was followed by his promotion to the rank of post-captain in June, 1814, and in

the following year he was placed among the Companions of the Order of the Bath. On leaving the gallant little *Wizard* in October, 1814, his ship's company wrote him the following quaint farewell letter—an unusual attention in the days of press-gang and harsh discipline:

"HONOURED CAPTAIN,

"Condescend to receive the congratulations of your ship's company for your Preferment of which they are sensible of your Deserving. But at the same time it is with Regret we parted which are sensible of the Loss we sustain in losing so valuable a Captain as we never again expect to meet with your Fellow. You have looked on us with the Eye of a Tender Parent over his children, and be assured that as long as the Wizard sails the salt Water your name shall ever be mentioned with Respect. We conclude remaining the happy brig's Company while you commanded us."

The "Tender Parent" of this large family (then scarcely more than a boy himself) received this tribute in the spirit in which it was offered, and treasured the rough and blotted paper until the day of his death.

These were great days indeed for young and ambitious men, not fearful of acting upon their own initiative, yet single-eyed in seeking their country's advantage.

The peace which followed condemned my father and many other rising officers to inaction; but in 1819 he was afloat again, in command of the *Menai*, a 26-gun frigate, and one of Napoleon's seaguard at St. Helena. He had an opportunity, therefore, of forming an opinion on one much-debated question, and always exonerated Sir Hudson Lowe from the charge of petty tyranny and harshness towards his great prisoner,

saying that he acted in strict accordance with orders from the Home Government, which he had no power to mitigate. Napoleon's rôle was certainly that of the martyr, and endless allowance must be also made for "such a bird in such a cage," and the irremediable agonies of captivity to a mind like his. It was possible, my father thought, that Sir Hudson Lowe may sometimes have been tactless and mistaken, but he was never wilfully harsh; and, indeed, the tact of a Chesterfield would scarcely have been adequate to that unparalleled situation.

As an example of the smaller difficulties, I may give an incident recorded by one of my father's officers during their stay. Some little fish, somewhat resembling smelt, and only to be caught off St. Helena at particular seasons, were brought to Sir Hudson Lowe, who, knowing that they were considered a delicacy, said: "See that they are properly packed and are at once sent off to the General at Longwood, with my best respects and a suitable apology for the fish being so few in number."

This took place as the party at Plantation House was going to dinner. An hour or two later the messenger reappeared.

"Did the General return any answer?" asked Sir Hudson.

"He has returned the fish, your Excellency, exactly as they were sent."

"Did he send no message with them?"

"Monsieur Cypriani informed the servant that the Emperor desired it might be intimated to your Excellency that he was not in the habit of being supplied with fish no bigger than his thumb."

"Well," said Sir Hudson philosophically, when the

servants had left the room, "the General knows he may insult *me* with impunity." This was his sole comment.

And yet, if it seem a childish irritation in Napoleon, who can estimate the misery of such a prisoner?

This same young officer was taken by one of the ladies of Plantation House past Longwood, and as they skirted the garden—

"Do you see that little man," she said, "stooping over a flower-bed and propping the stem of a china rose? That is Napoleon."

He rose from his stooping posture to contemplate his work, not knowing that he was watched. He was dressed in a loose grey frock, large military boots, and the famous three-cornered hat. Directly he saw the intruders he folded his arms upon his breast and strode away to the house.

It is a picture that stamps itself on the brain—the weary days, the killing monotony, the slow rusting away into decay and death. We may have been just; we were not generous.

Some months later the *Menai* was relieved of this disagreeable duty, and sailed for the Cape, narrowly escaping destruction by fire on her way. An account survives, written by one of the officers, and is so typical of my father's character and determination that I cannot withhold it here.

He writes: "I and some other midshipmen were with the captain in his cabin, reading aloud Coleridge's 'Christabel,' and he had just read:

> "'I guess 'twas frightful there to see
> A lady richly clad as she—
> Beautiful exceedingly,'

when he suddenly started and leaned forward in his

seat, listening apparently for the repetition of some sound which had alarmed him.

"The reading was suspended for a few moments, when the captain, impatiently snuffing the air, rushed from the cabin. We followed, at a loss to know the reason, but soon heard a murmur rising from the lower deck, and then the awful cry of 'Fire!'

"The fire-bell rang out; all went to their stations to fight the fire, which had broken out in the boatswain's storeroom, separated only by a double bulkhead from the powder magazine. The thought flashed across my mind that no earthly exertion could save us. My station was below on the main deck, from which all efforts were directed to clear the magazine, to man the pumps, and hand buckets of water through the main deck ports.

"The fire raged with fury, and at every discharge of water sent up suffocating gusts of smoke, the storeroom being full of canvas, tarpaulings, and other combustible stuff The boatswain particularly distinguished himself. With a rope round his waist and a hatchet in his hand, he was repeatedly lowered into the burning storeroom, breaking open the lockers and tearing down stores of all kind. Vigorously did the noble fellow work for a few moments, and then had to be dragged up; but the more we laboured the more the fire gained, and as a last resource the lower deck was scuttled and a stream of water poured through on the fire below, but with small success. Finally one great effort was made, every bucket and tub was filled and simultaneously poured through the openings; but to the astonishment of everyone, a fresh flash of fire and a dense column of smoke followed the discharge. The men stood aghast, with the empty buckets in their hands; and then a murmur arose, and the practised ear of the captain caught the import.

"'Send the carpenter here!' he exclaimed, in a voice almost amounting to a scream. 'Go on deck,' he said; 'render every boat unfit for sea; and now, men,' he continued, 'we shall sink or swim together.' A round of cheers followed; the men flew to their work, and scarcely had the axe been laid to the first boat on the booms, when it was announced that the fire was got under, the last flash of flame and the cloud of

smoke having been its expiring effort. Then came the question of how the fire had originated. It appeared that the boatswain's yeoman, one of the best men and best liked in the ship, had taken a candle out of a lantern and stuck it against a beam, and had then forgotten it when he went to his supper. For this fault there was but one punishment in those stern days, and that was the cat-o'-nine-tails. Much sympathy was felt for the poor fellow, but no voice was raised to plead for pardon. The man was lashed to the gratings, the boatswain had taken off his coat preparatory to giving the first dozen, the stiff figure of the master-at-arms stood by ready to record the stripes. The officers and men stood at attention, looking at the captain for the expected order, 'Give him a dozen'; but instead he turned to the boatswain, raised his hand upward and said, 'Cast him off.' In an instant the poor fellow stood free and undisgraced amongst his shipmates.

"'Elkins,' said the captain, 'I cannot flog you. It is not twenty-four hours since God forgave us all; it is fitting I should now forgive you. Pipe down.' The men's pent-up feelings found vent in a cheer that made the ship ring again, as this short but eloquent address concluded."

In after-years Elkins was master of a small coasting vessel trading out of Exmouth. On one stormy night she was wrecked when trying to make the harbour, and all hands were lost. Elkins's body was recovered and buried in the parish churchyard, and by the simple stone recording his fate I have often stood with my father, and heard him say, "I am glad he was not flogged," as we turned away.

CHAPTER II

MY FATHER—*continued*

Quoique leurs chapeaux sont bien laids
God-dam ! moi j'aime les Anglais :
Ils ont un si bon caractère !
Comme ils sont polis ! et surtout
Que leurs plaisirs sont de bon gout !
Non, chez nous, point,
Point de ces coups de poing
Qui font tant d'honneur a l'Angleterre.
French Sea-Song.

ARRIVING at the Cape, under my father's superintendence, the first settlement at Port Elizabeth, in Algoa Bay, was made.

He landed a party of 2,000 emigrants on the lonely coast amid such difficulties of human character and natural circumstance as may be imagined. None the less, he inspired all with his own energy and spirit of order. A canvas city sprang up, and his sagacious regulations held the young colony successfully to its business, whilst the help of the officers and men in the necessary sports and relaxations insured a happy beginning.

Following on this he was placed in command at the Mauritius that he might suppress the infamous slave trade carried on between Africa and the French colonies and Arab ports about the Persian Gulf. I am disposed to think that if his heart was more in one

service than another it was in this, for greater outrage upon God and man was never known than the traffic in sorrow and shame then beginning to weigh upon the public conscience. Surely if Elizabeth's old sea-dog Sir John Hawkins had realized the meaning of the fatal crest he adopted so proudly—the "Demi-Moor proper, bound," and had seen his youthful sin "become a national institution and a national curse for generations yet unborn," he who trembled at nothing might have trembled at the "mourning and woe and lamentation" written within and without the scroll he had unrolled. Success was complete as far as the *Mauritius* was concerned. The whole trade was broken up, and my father concluded a treaty with the Imaum of Muscat (afterwards confirmed by the Government) for the suppression of the traffic. A like treaty was afterwards made with the King of Madagascar, and on the application of Mr. Wilberforce, the commission was prolonged for an additional year.

It was probably about this time that Mr. Wilberforce wrote him the following letter:

"DEAR SIR,

"I trust you will not think I take an undue liberty with you when I gratify the feelings of my heart by addressing you without obtaining any previous introduction, which I doubt not I might otherwise procure through the medium of some common friend; but I am persuaded that it will be a sufficient introduction to you that we are interested in the same great object: the deliverance of our fellow-creatures from one of the greatest practical evils that ever afflicted the human race.

"I have heard from several quarters of your generous and indefatigable exertions for the suppression of the slave trade on the eastern side of Africa, and feel no

small gratification in assuring you that your public spirit and philanthropy have obtained for you the respect and regard of many in this country, who consider it an honour to have a countryman thus accrediting the name of Briton in a distant land.

"When you return to this country I hope you will allow me the pleasure of paying my personal respects to you, and of assuring you of the esteem and regard with which

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your very faithful servant,
"W. WILBERFORCE.

"*May* 28, 1822."

This recognition from such a source gave him great and well-deserved pleasure, and led to a friendship which only ended with the great philanthropist's life.

Many and singular were the adventures met with in pursuance of the duties on the East Coast of Africa. They might, indeed, of themselves fill a volume. The story of the *Camilla* is a case in point.

She was a slaver manned by Frenchmen, and commanded by a man named Leroux—such a buccaneer that it was asserted he had vowed to his patron saint (whose office can certainly have been no sinecure) to blow his craft out of the water—crew, cargo, and all—sooner than allow her to be captured. She was credited, however, with matchless powers of sailing and such beauty of lines, that it could only be said of her, as the Frenchman said of his mistress:

"Une aussi belle taille que la sienne,
N'était pas faite
Pour être honnête !"

Naturally all this romantic rumour fired the ambition of the *Menai's* crew from the captain downwards, and when over the lowland of Imbat the top-masts of just

such a schooner were descried in the harbour of Zanzibar, my father himself went aloft, glass in hand, to make sure of his prize.

It was concluded that the *Camilla* lay before them, and he immediately decided that his boats should make a surprise attack the same night.

So dense was the darkness when they started that the water literally could not be seen under their bows, and the lieutenant in command (Hay, afterwards Captain Hay, C.B., killed in the first New Zealand War) was obliged to give orders to lie on their oars until daylight, embayed as they were in a narrow channel between the islands in the entrance of the harbour.

With the faintest streak of dawn they started anew, and there, revealed indistinctly in the dimness, and snugly lying under the guns of a fort, was their prey.

With one accord the boats made their swoop, the pinnace boarding on the starboard bow, the yawl and gig on the quarters.

It was still too dark to be certain whether anyone was on the look-out. Suddenly, without an instant's warning, a bearded figure emerged from behind a coil of rope, and, plunging head-foremost first at one, then at the other of the two officers, struck them each between wind and water such a blow as to lay both, in spite of pistols and cutlasses, prostrate on the deck. This efficient sentry proved to be a huge black ram.

The next interruption was a voice from below:

"Que diable va là? Vous vous amusez, donc, mes brebis? C'est Grégoire qui vous arrangera, joliment, les affaires. Ha! qui vive?"

The speaker came stumbling up the hatchway, and

received (*chez lui*) on emerging so staggering a blow that away he went rolling down the ladder, whilst the boats' crews quietly and methodically continued their work of fastening down the hatches. The next matter was to secure the skipper, Leroux, and he was found fast asleep in his berth and brought on deck.

Though literally caught napping, he was perfectly wide awake to the situation, and without waste of speech pointed ironically to the fort frowning overhead, with its forty yawning muzzles in the embrasures.

The gesture was significant, for the Governor of Zanzibar was well known to be one of the principal patrons of the slave trade, and the only hope for the *Menai's* boats was to clear out before observation was attracted.

Ten minutes later a boat put off with the Governor's compliments and the information that the *Camilla* was under his special protection, his intention being to blow her assailants out of the water the moment a sail was dropped.

To this ultimatum Lieutenant Hay (who was under orders from my father to take the schooner out of harbour) immediately replied that the Governor might blow away and be d——d, adding, however, that if he attempted to blow the *Camilla* out of the water the fleet (then off Pemba) would speedily blow him and his fort into it.

The boat departed with this defiance, and the immediate and most pressing anxiety was to find a pilot out of the hidden dangers of the harbour. None other than Captain Leroux himself occurred to Lieutenant Hay's inventive mind, and in a white fury and with a ship's pistol at his head (for no lesser

argument sufficed), he piloted his vessel out to meet the *Menai* and her fate.

The ships re-entered the harbour later, and instead of the expected round from the battery, the same envoy re-appeared, with the Governor's regrets and apologies that he should have mistaken the *Menai's* boats for those of some entirely disreputable pirates known to be lurking in the neighbourhood.

As on examination of the fort it was found that only one gun was fit for service, the worth of these apologies was manifest.

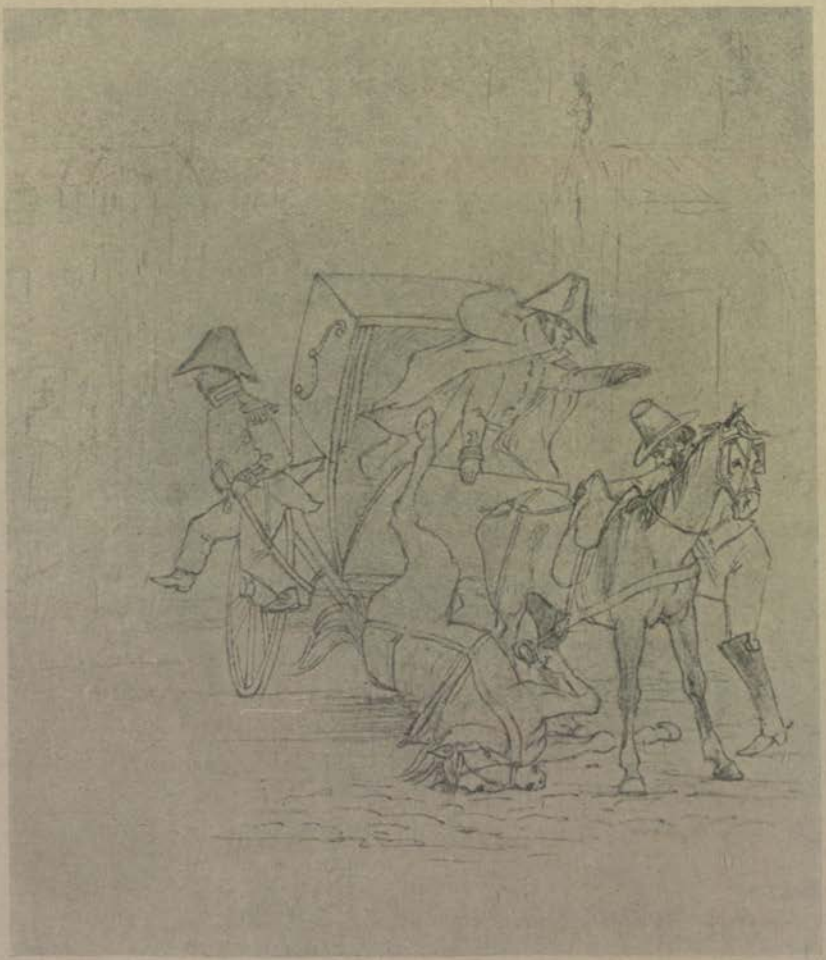
The *Camilla* proved to be a prize in all respects well worthy of her reputation. There were 140 slaves, and concealed about the persons of the crew 10,000 Spanish dollars; nor had rumour overstated her beauty and her sailing powers.

It was clear from internal evidence that the motto of the ship's company might well have been that famous one, worthy of being inscribed upon the Abbey of Thelema itself:

> "Mangez chaud, buvez frais,
> Et faites l'amour comme vous pourrez !"

It is, however, fair to add that my father met Captain Leroux some years later in the Mediterranean, and found him a very worthy and valorous person in all essentials when removed from the temptations of the accursed slave trade.

He had so often served against the French (now so happily our friends) that he had the opportunity of appreciating to the full the national courtesy and courage, and many were the incidents he quoted from his eventful life to justify his admiration for the peculiar mingling of gaiety and high gallantry in which they surpass all other peoples.



F. Gifford.

CAPTAIN LOCKYER, C.B., H.M.S. "ALBION," AND COMMANDER NOTT, RETURNING FROM ROYAL LEVEE AT LISBON, 1846.

Note Captain Lockyer was a most diminutive man.

To face p. 24.

I remember visiting with him the tomb of Napoleon, and meeting there an old soldier who had served in the Grande Armée. My father could speak French, and the two fraternized and yarned after a delightful fashion, each giving all due honour and glory to the achievements of the other's country. I listened with a pleasure and interest difficult to describe; they had seen and done so much, and the points of resemblance and contrast were so striking.

His feeling was reciprocated by many chivalrous Frenchmen whom he had met, with kindliness honourable to both, in peace and war. I have headed this chapter with some lines which afforded him amusement, as recording one friendly French *aperçu* of our manners and customs.

The *Menai* was paid off in September, 1824. To such an extent had my father's health become impaired (during the extensive surveys he had made of the Ethiopian Archipelago and of the African coast) that for five years he was reduced to the lowest state of debility. Thus it was not till January, 1837, that he was appointed to command the *Pembroke*, of 74 guns, *vice* Sir Thomas Fellowes, appointed to the *Vanguard*. Joining the *Pembroke* at Gibraltar—the *Vanguard* being at Malta—his old friend Sir Thomas Fellowes objected to give up the command before he had joined his new ship. An undoubted mistake, and the question was to be decided in an unusual way.

A heavy south-west gale came on; the *Pembroke* dragged her anchors, and her only safety lay in weighing and standing out of the bay. It was a critical piece of seamanship—a question of life or death if she could be made to weather Cabritta Point.

Sir Thomas Fellowes was seriously ill with an attack

of gout, quite unable (although he attempted it, seated in a chair on the poop) to take command. Three times my father offered to take charge, but was refused. The last time he said: "You must decide now once for all, Fellowes; it is the last chance. I think I can save her still; in another minute I cannot." Sir Thomas recognised the necessity; my father was given command, and by the most consummate seamanship weathered the point, the back lash of the breakers covering the ship with foam.

In the Mediterranean he was constantly employed on detached diplomatic missions; amongst them he was sent to Venice to do honour to the young Prince Albert (then betrothed to the Queen), who was completing his education by travel. The singular ability, modesty, and goodness of the Prince left an indelible impression on my father's memory. His next command was the *Canopus*, of 84 guns, in the Channel Squadron, from 1845 to 1848. The following year he became a rear-admiral, after having been nearly thirty-six years a captain. He was then sixty-two years of age, and one of the youngest of his rank.

A contrast indeed to the present day, when, by the operation of age retirement, men are not ten years on the captains' list.

A year later he was nominated Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific station, with his flag in the *Portland*, an old 50-gun frigate.

Here again the kindliness of his nature, and his readiness to accept unusual responsibility, came to the front.

He showed the first by the deep interest he took in the Pitcairn islanders, the interesting descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*. Twice he personally



Capt Fairfax Morresby
carrying on H M S Canopus
1845
From a sketch by F Gifford



F. Gifford.

A SUDDEN SQUALL: DINNER IN THE WARDROOM.

To face p. 26.

visited the island, where, by his attractive personality and generosity, he came to be regarded with filial affection. He formed a high estimate of George Nobbs, the spiritual guide, physician, poet, and law-giver of the island community.

This remarkable man was born in 1799, and first served as a midshipman in the Royal Navy; but, quitting it after the peace in 1814, he then served under the famous Lord Cochrane in fighting for the deliverance of Chili and Peru from the Spanish yoke. There he distinguished himself by his cool and unflinching courage. In the cutting out of the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda* from under the batteries at Callao he fought his way into the foretop of the frigate and loosed the fore-top sail, so that when Lord Cochrane had cut the cables he was able to sail her clear of the batteries. For this service Nobbs became a lieutenant, and was engaged in other desperate encounters.

On one occasion, when in command of a gunboat, he sustained a loss of forty-eight men killed and wounded out of sixty-four.

The war of liberation ended, Nobbs, after many other adventures, was seized with the desire to live a peaceful life and benefit his fellow-men. He had heard of the Pitcairn islanders, and earnestly wished to visit the island; but before he could accomplish his object he had sailed twice round the world.

Finally, in 1823, at Callao, he purchased for £150 a frail craft of 18 tons, in which he and another man sailed for Pitcairn, arriving there in October, 1828. From John Adams, the only survivor of the mutineers, he received a hearty welcome. This John Adams, a man-slayer as well as a mutineer, had, through the instrumentality of a remarkable dream, been led, after

the death of all the adult men on the island, to bring up the youthful community in the knowledge of the Bible and the fear of God.

A year later Adams died, having bequeathed to Nobbs the succession to the pastoral office. It was the earnest desire of the islanders that their pastor should be ordained. My father undertook this charge at his own expense. He sent Nobbs to England, where he was ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and graciously received by Her Majesty the Queen (who sent by him her portrait to the islanders). After his return to Pitcairn, for thirty years he continued his self-chosen, useful career, exercising a spiritual influence which still survives amongst his island flock.

My father's readiness to accept responsibility was shown in his prompt decision to protect the lives and property of our countrymen, and other foreign residents, in Valparaiso when sporadic revolutions broke out in Chili.

He held aloof from all political parties, but he did not hesitate to land the armed seamen and marines of the warships to protect the Custom House and banks from any interference. The happiest results followed the invariable exercise of his tact and prudence.

On his giving up command of the station, the President of Chili, the merchants, and the principal inhabitants of Valparaiso, by a unanimous vote, had his portrait painted by Sir Francis Grant, the President of the Royal Academy, and hung it in the Balsa, or Exchange, at Valparaiso. To this compliment they added a valuable presentation of silver plate.

In 1854 he received the honorary degree of D.C.L.

from the University of Oxford—a distinction which afforded him the utmost gratification, and, indeed, is not a common reward of merit either in the Army or Navy—whilst his services were officially recognised by the K.C.B.

In 1858 he underwent the sad experience common to so many English families, his son, Commander Fairfax Moresby, being lost at sea. The circumstances were perhaps unusually distressing, for my brother, then in command of the *Sappho*, had only been married six weeks (to a niece of Sir E. Lacon, Bart.) when he left England. He was ordered to Australia, and the ship was spoken as she entered Bass's Straits.

Then silence fell, and nothing more was ever heard of ship, crew, or captain. It was supposed she had capsized in a squall, but the sea guards its secrets well. How my father felt the long and hopeless suspense may be imagined.

Some years later he received the G.C.B., and was successively Rear and Vice Admiral of the United King, an ancient and very honourable office mentioned in the statutes of Richard II., and in former days carrying with it judicial powers.

This was his public career. My first memory of him is different enough. One of his officers describes him as "rather above than under the middle size, with a remarkably intelligent expression, dark sparkling eyes, fine auburn hair, and a complexion bronzed by hard service. He was one of those enviable men whom a person cannot help liking at first sight." I know not how that may have been—a son does not stand far enough off to judge—but I know that he commanded the reverence and love of his household, and that I (with the youngest's privilege of sitting on his knee

whilst my brothers stood round to hear the sea-songs he took pleasure in recalling) gained daily impressions from a man great in his devotion to duty, and in all ways good and worthy to be revered. Nor do I hesitate for a moment to record this belief and the incidents of his long and honourable service, for I know not why a man should be admitted to praise the country that gave him birth, and yet must needs be silent about the father to whom he owes all the noble tradition that in his eyes has made that country mistress and mother, the first and highest symbol of duty that the world can offer.

CHAPTER III

ALLERFORD

" Home then was home, my dear, full of kindly faces;
Home then was home, my dear, happy for the child—
Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland;
Song, joy of song, built a palace in the wild.
Now, when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,
Lone stands the house, and the chimney-stone is cold.
Lone let it stand, since the friends are all departed—
The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old."

R. L. STEVENSON.

THE village of Allerford, in Somerset, where my childhood was spent, lies in a peaceful valley, bounded on the north by Porlock Bay, on the west by the Exmoors, and on the east by the Minehead Hills. Through the village a turbulent moorland stream—beloved of all the younger population—rushes northward to the Bristol Channel, where, meeting the great masses of wave-worn shingle flung up by the Atlantic rollers, it loses itself in such a trickle as the ebbing tide permits.

Allerford is still untouched by railroads and the devices of modern science, still unsophisticated and infinitely charming to mind and eye; but seventy-eight years ago it was a bit of the England of centuries back—the England of settled custom and belief, unconscious of the vast economic and mental changes awaiting the country, and of the throes in which a new England would be born—whether for better or worse what man can say?

Tiverton, some thirty miles distant, was the nearest town; Minehead, now so flourishing, a decaying village, whose small trade with Bristol and Wales had vanished, and where commerce was represented by one or two shops filled with the usual miscellaneous rural requirements. It boasted a dentist, however, who doubled the part with that of village barber—carrying on both avocations in a thatched cottage into which we children were marched on terribly recurrent occasions, and subjected to operations all unknown to the aseptic dentistry of the present day. I recall an instrument of horror known as the "key," round which a red rag of infinite suggestion to the youthful mind was wrapped, ere it grasped a tender young tooth, and with the leverage of a screw forced it out of the jaw. If the subject had neither kicked, shrieked, nor bit, the sum of sixpence awaited him as a reward; but I remember that it was not often earned: silence was too dear at the price, and there was a pleasure that could not be foregone in distinguishing one's agony by the loudest and most prolonged howl of the party.

During these early years my father, then Captain Moresby, was on half-pay, and had rented a large farm from his close friend and distant connection Sir Thomas Acland, the bountiful and beloved lord of all the broad acres and moorlands surrounding Allerford. We lived at Allerford House, the dower-house of the Acland family. It stood at the entrance of the village, halfway between Minehead and Porlock, and a few paces farther was the narrow high-pitched bridge spanning the stream, and seeming all too high for the brawling water beneath; though on a winter's day when a spate comes "foaming down like a great roan horse

and rears at the leap of the hedgerows," it is more than justified of its builders.

On either side the village straggled for about half a mile, a series of cob-built thatched cottages, primitive but thick-walled and warm, with stamped clay floors and a total absence of what is now considered comfort, if I except the bright wood fire and the dainty bit of curtain at the casement. But in my memory the chief privation of the time appears to have been light. It is scarcely realised how impossible work and family intercourse in the only hour of rest were before the advent of the paraffin lamp in country districts. This has been a distinct influence for good and enlightenment of more sorts than one. The bread-winner's wage was from 6s. to 7s. per week, but each had a small garden to supplement his earnings. They were poachers as inveterate as he of whom it was said that the only thing he could not poach was a hard-boiled egg, and I recall the fact that hedgehogs also were a common article of food. The wealth of the farmers was in strong contrast with the poverty of their dependents. Wheat was, I think, 70s. a quarter. The two principal farmers near us died, one worth £80,000 and the other £60,000. These men used to dine with their labourers at twelve o'clock in their shirt-sleeves, and with no pretence to any superior station, and their wives and daughters did the lighter farm-work.

The magnet which chiefly drew our restless feet was the mill, with its dipping water-wheel and mighty grinding-stones—so vast, so living in its movements that it filled us with a great awe when the miller permitted our ascent to the loft, where, amidst the crackling drone of the wheels, we saw the bags of wheat emptied into the funnel, and sliding away in a never-

ceasing stream, to reappear as flour. A marvellous and almost magic manifestation of human might it seemed to our fascinated eyes, and yet the personality of the mill itself appealed to us more strongly still. I see it in winter, lonely and gaunt, as the scene of a desolate fairy-tale, when the frost had gripped it, and the great icicles hung and clattered from rim and wheel, and we children dreamed of it as a giant in the bonds of a conqueror, piteous and helpless. Our triumph combined with its own in the advent of the wet south winds, and the dropping thaw that dibbled the little holes under the bushes in the snow, and freed the downward rush of the water, until the wheel sang at its work once more.

Amongst the villagers possibly two or three could read, although I do not recall one who could do so intelligibly. There was a dame-school at Horner, about one and a half miles away, but few children went there, for home and field work claimed them early. The majesty of the law was represented only by the stocks, which, falling into decay, stood by the church gates; but I do not know that conduct was any the worse for the absence of repression. Amongst these simple, kindly people my father reigned unquestioned. He was their adviser, their doctor, their general referee, and he filled the post the better for the varied experiences of his naval life. My mother was, of course, the Lady Bountiful of the whole district, for the Aclands came but occasionally to their Allerford home.

The farmers and villagers were our only near neighbours, and, like nearly all West-Country people, were an interesting study. Extremely intelligent, but superstitious to a degree, they fully believed in the power of wise women over certain diseases, and really

not without some apparent reason. I recall an outbreak of warts on my chubby hands, and the visit to one of these who lived in a lonely cottage near the village. The ritual consisted of a charm, or incantation very slowly pronounced, while she rubbed in a mysterious ointment, which stained the skin like walnut-juice. My hands were wrapped up for two days, and, sure enough, when the bandages were removed not a wart was left.

There were other and less gentle beliefs. Sheeted ghosts haunted the churchyard precincts, and no villager dared enter them after dark. Many were the well-authenticated instances of spectral horsemen scouring the lonely bridle-paths. We trembled, but it was partly with delight. It extended the bounds of our world into the invisible, and it was a luxury to lie warm in bed and picture the wild hunt sweeping through the winter storm under the safely shut windows.

Our parish church was Selworthy, one and a half miles away, but on Sunday all trooped there—the men in their elaborately smocked and pleated frocks, the women decently bonneted and shawled. If Sir Thomas Acland happened to be in his snug parlour pew (the old muniment or priest's room of Roman Catholic times), approached by a private staircase, and fitted with armchairs and fireplace, his eagle eye ranged over his tenants and labourers, and if any missed attendance for other than the most incontrovertible reasons, they were sure to hear of it again.

Sixty years later I worshipped once more in Selworthy Church. The parlour pew had become the vestry. The Aclands sat in straight-backed seats, and the reigning Sir Thomas read the lessons of the day to an unawed and independent congregation.

I cannot recollect that the villagers after childhood had or were supposed to need any amusements. The monotony of toil was only broken by Christmas, the ingathering of the principal crops, ploughing matches and sheep-shearing, and of these the first was the sheep-shearing. These moorland sheep were very wiry, and agile as the red deer with which they browsed; but the dogs' fine instinct knew their separate flocks, and with their help the sheep were easily penned by the side of a stream, which was then dammed into a succession of ponds. In these they were washed into snowy whiteness, and when the business was over the shearers gathered in a body and marched to "the big [our] house." Outside the kitchen door were prepared two large tubs of water, with handfuls of rose-leaves floating in them, that the men might wash; and this done, they sat down to a huge feed, seasoned with hot spiced cider, and sped with jest and song. The burden of one of the latter lingers in my memory:

> "I ate and I ate, and what did I eat?
> I ate the leg of the mallard,
> The back and the breast, and all the rest—
> I ate the whole of the mallard."

The maids were there also, and on such an occasion were not over shy; but I was too young to understand that portion of the festivities.

The next excitement came in the autumn, when, after we had all helped to gather the apples into rosy heaps, they were carried to the lofts, where the great cider-presses crushed out their juice into little channels, which united into one big reservoir of orchard-scented liquid. Later, as night closed in, the custom, descending from heathen times, of wassailing

the apple-trees was faithfully observed. Every old gun, blunderbuss, or pistol that the village could produce was brought out, and masters and men, women and children, all trooped to the principal orchard, the men with their guns, the women with wassail-bowls filled with cider hot and spiced, and bobbing with roasted apples. Then, with shouting and cheering and a general *feu de joie* over the trees, all joined in the chorus:

"Old apple-tree, I wassail thee,
And well mayst thou bear
Hats full, caps full, rooms full,
For cider bright and fair."

Finally, a piece of bread soaked in cider was left on the branches of a tall apple-tree. This was, of course, believed to be an offering to the robins in honour of the well-known Calvary legend, but it is much more probably an oblation to the friendly earth-spirit who brings the blossom and the fruit in due season. Into what strange cult of Pomona, descending, perhaps, in direct line from the Roman conqueror, with his worship of the apple goddess in her orchards, does this ceremony take us back, and from that into what remoter antiquity?

Then followed the ploughing matches—four competitors at a time, the older ones in sure confidence, and the younger ones nervously anxious to win the prizes offered by Sir Thomas Acland.

Later followed the harvest home. When the last sheaf had fallen, it was plaited into the form of a crown, called "the neck," to be carried with cheers to "the big house." I observe in Blackmore's "Lorna Doone" (and no more faithful pictures of Exmoor manners exist) that in describing a harvest feast of

some two hundred years ago, he alludes to the last sheaf as the neck. "It was decked with ribbons gaily and set upon the mantel-shelf." What the name means I cannot tell, but it is certainly one of very ancient usage. The neck was received with ceremony, one door or one window being left unguarded, whilst at every other the maids kept unwinking watch, armed with pails of water ready to souse the harvest man as he carried it. If by good luck he hit upon the unguarded door or window and got in dry, he claimed half a crown, and the neck remained as a trophy in the kitchen; but if he could not dodge the pails, his labour was lost. As a matter of fact, he had often a sweetheart in the garrison, and the right tip followed as a matter of course.

After this diversion the village worked and slept until Christmas brought the high tide and holiday of the year. Anxiously we children listened for the thundering knock at the door which announced the mummers, when, in answer to our scream of "Who's there?" would come the masculine chorus:

> "Here come I, old Father Christmas!
> Christmas or not,
> I hope old Father Christmas
> Will never be forgot."

It certainly would not by us. We tore the door open, and in marched a medley of villagers, armed with wooden swords, paper helmets, and ribbons streaming from their smocks—a glorious, jovial sight. Immediately St. George stood forth—the majesty of England incarnate—and challenged the Turkish knight to deadly combat, whilst breathless we watched the fight until he fell before St. George's conquering sword. There was a pause full of awe for us, and

then the victor demanded in the epic strain that befits heroes:

> "Is there a doctor that can be found
> To cure this knight of his deadly wound?"
>
> (accentuating the rhymes of "found" and "wound").

There was. The doctor, smock-frocked and rosy, stood forth and declared with all the confidence of his profession:

> "I'll touch his eyes, his mouth and chin,
> And say, 'Rise, dead man, and fight agin!'"

It was done; the resurrection was completed with a few whacking blows, and our feelings were relieved accordingly. Then cider and sixpences followed, and the singing of the old Somerset and Devon ballads —"Widdicombe Fair" and the like—until, with a final cheer for my parents, the mummers departed to awake the village echoes on their devious way home.

We children had Exmoor ponies, which we rode bare-backed as we galloped over the moors. With a bent pin baited with caddis we landed miraculous catches of minnows, and sometimes even a trout, from the myriad waters of that land of streams. But the Christmas coming of the Aclands at Holnicote was the purple patch of our year. There we all fore-gathered, young and old, round the wood fire in the hall where on Christmas Eve lay the Yule-log—an ashen faggot bound with seven withy bands—and as each band cracked and snapped in the flame, with clapping of hands and infinite rejoicing we each wished a wish.

So quietly and happily life sped in the little village, whose name I was one day to write on the map in

enchanted seas, very far away, on the other side of the world.

I need not dwell on my school-days. They resembled, I fear, all those of the period: we were ill fed, ill taught, treated with ill-judged severity. Our methods are far from perfect now; there is much still to be learnt in the most delicate and difficult of all sciences—that of education; but the advance upon those of seventy years ago affords encouragement for the future. There is at least an attempt at discrimination of character, and the grosser forms of cruelty, both from older boys and masters, may be said to have disappeared. We suffered, but took it for granted that every schoolboy must go through the same mill, and therefore bore it as best we could. I had reached the age of twelve when my great day of deliverance found me. I was at my desk, and a letter such as I had never seen before—a sheet of foolscap folded, sealed with a huge seal and marked "On H.M. Service"—was put into my hands. I tore it open, and read with exultation that I was appointed a Volunteer of the 1st Class of H.M.S. *Victor*, in the West Indies, with orders to proceed to the Commander-in-Chief at Devonport for my examination. To this was added:

"A volunteer of the 1st Class must not be under twelve years of age. He must be fit for service, able to write English from dictation, and acquainted with the four first rules of arithmetic, reduction and rule of three.

"(Signed) Your obedient servant,
"J. BARROW."

That I, whose ears had just been wrenched and knuckles rapped, should have an obedient servant in a man so great sent me into the seventh heaven of

delight; but I descended quickly enough when the responsibility of an answer flashed on me. I sat in deep consideration, and finally, and after much anxious thought, I wrote:

"Dear Mr. Barrow [he really was Sir John]—I am much obliged for your letter appointing me to the Navy, and I will go to Devonport at once."

Thus ended my school-days.

CHAPTER IV

H.M.S. "CALEDONIA"

"A handkerchief held all the treasure I had,
Which over my shoulder I threw;
And away I trudged, with a heart rather sad,
To join some jovial ship's crew."

So sang my father, as he and I on a cold December day (1842) walked from our home at Newton Ferrers to Bovisand, the house of the Queen's Harbour Master of Plymouth Sound, in whose boat we went on board the *Caledonia*, the flag-ship at Devonport.

The Admiralty order for my examination was presented, for the absence of the captain and the naval instructor on leave made no difference in those informal days. The master, David Gossman, a Trafalgar veteran, was summoned, and he was directed to examine me. Touching his hat to my father, he said: "Your boy will be all right, sir, never fear! but they didn't want to examine such youngsters in our day, and I don't know that they're any the better for it now they do"—an opinion coinciding so entirely with what I was feeling at the moment that it gave me a certain amount of badly needed encouragement when I was shut up in a secluded cabin with pen and ink, and left to my unaided exertions. Yet the examination paper was not an alarming one. It consisted (and I expect the envy of Osborne in recording it) of a rule-of-three sum

on a subject which naturally occurred to my examiner's mind: "If 50 pounds of salt pork cost £2 10s., what is the price of 1 pound?" This accomplished, my name and that of the ship written, and having been found sound in wind and limb, Gossman reported that I had passed an excellent examination, and signed my certificate. Therefore I was duly entered as a volunteer, first class, on the books of the *Caledonia*, my appointment to the *Victor* having been cancelled. And well for me it was, for shortly after she was lost in a hurricane off Bermuda, and all on board perished.

The next ceremony consisted of a visit to Admiralty House, that I might make my bow to Sir David Milne, the admiral.

I have always remembered him as one of the noblest survivors of the old war, for without a particle of interest (in days when interest counted for quite as much as at any time since) and many years in the merchant service, he had carved his way with his sword to the top of his profession. There he stood, gaunt and grim, eighty years old, with the storm and stress of it all written upon his face, but not a stoop or a bend in his strong six feet. I looked upon him with awe. This was the man who, as first lieutenant of the *Blanche*, after the captain had been killed, lashed the enemy's bowsprit to the stump of his own mainmast, and, the *Blanche* having no stern ports, created them by the simple expedient of firing two of her own guns through the stern, and thus establishing a raking fire. And this was not all. The victory was won, but the ships broke adrift and every boat of the *Blanche* was shattered; whereupon Milne, plunging into the sea, and followed by twelve seamen, swam to the gallant foe and took possession of a ship that had

lost 76 killed and 110 wounded out of a complement of 210. Nor had even this been the greatest exploit of an heroic career which began under Cornwallis 130 years ago from the time when I write these words. I was not too young to feel the pride and thrill of taking my place in a service where such men were leaders.

My rig-out being complete (and unspeakably complete, as my childish mind felt it to be, with a dirk 16 inches long and in a bright brass scabbard), I duly joined, and found myself a member of the gun-room mess. It is painful to set down aught but praise, but records of the older Navy have their value for the younger, and I own that there persisted the baneful influence of a bygone day and a bad system. Its tone was given by a number of old mates, the seniors of whom had been from nine to fourteen years in that rank, depressed and soured, poor fellows! by the daily sight of backstairs influence at work in pitchforking youngsters over their heads into berths to which they felt they had often a just claim. Meanwhile they were congregated in a guardship, with scant occupation and no supervision, whilst the younger boys were more or less at their mercy. Little wonder that bullying and immorality and bad language predominated, though I must add that the *Caledonia* was a harbour ship, and in this respect no type of a sea-going man-of-war. Luckily we youngsters were all so young, and hated our tormentors so cordially, that what they approved we were bound to detest, and thus a balance of safety was struck after a fashion. Those who were older made shift to protect themselves in more decided fashion. I recall a young Irish surgeon named Coffey who was considered to offer an opportunity for the humour of this clique on

joining. They questioned him with apparent gravity as to the examination he had passed, and informed him that, before joining the mess, there would be an additional examination by a board of its senior members. He took it for granted, and agreed in all good faith, and that evening five of the elder mates, arrayed in cocked hats and swords, sat at the gun-room table with their victim before them. Suffice it to say the questions were of such a nature that he exclaimed to the president: "Sir, you are no gentleman!" "No gentleman! We'll see about that!" was the reply. And the mate whistled (his usual custom) for his marine servant, with the order to bring him his pistols—"to shoot this beggar like a dog!" They were brought, and the young surgeon was told that he must either fight or apologise—alternatives of which he instantly chose the former. I recollect that he first wrote a letter to his mother, and can still recall the strained excitement with which we noted this, and saw him quietly take up his position before his opponent. The word was given to fire, and in an instant he realised he had been made a fool of. He wasted no words, but, throwing the pistol aside, he went for the bully with his fists.

Young, strong, and as hard as nails, he was able to give a good account of himself, for the oldster, though a skilful bruiser, was out of condition from ill-living. Still, it was an anxious fight, and we youngsters, feeling him to be our champion, shouted breathless encouragement as well as excitement would let us. The right triumphed when he got a staggering blow in that brought the bully to the deck, and we cheered ourselves hoarse again and again. His brief career showed the grand stuff there was in this Irish boy.

H.M.S. *Fair Rosamond* arrived in the Sound from the coast of Africa, scourged with a terrible attack of yellow fever. Two sets of doctors had succumbed, and it was almost certain death to take their place. Yet this lad immediately volunteered. He went, and the deadly fever took him—as brave and true a soul as ever sacrificed himself for others. I do not remember that Coffey's victory checked the bullying except in his own case, but that was endurable after you got used to it. What we resented as a great indignity—and, indeed, a fraud—was the fact that we were obliged to make our dinner at twelve o'clock upon the leavings of the previous day, whilst the oldsters sat down to a sumptuous repast at six o'clock, of which we were allowed no share. The grievance was very real, for we paid the same mess-money, and the only return we got was that on "duff days" some of the sweets were left for us.

The breaking strain finally came when some of the old mates, coming off late for dinner, monopolised our duff. That evening the fork was stuck in the beam at nine o'clock as usual, this being the signal for the youngsters to turn in, and we left the mess, but only to gather outside the gun-room door and settle a plan of attack on our chief enemy. This done, we dashed the door open, and, like a pack of wolves, pulled him down, and, banging his head on the deck, kicked him until the seniors rushed in, and, tearing us off, bestowed on each an unmerciful licking. But we had had our revenge. An unpleasant scene—yes, but I thought, and still think, the system, and not ourselves, was to blame.

The captain must have got wind somehow of these gun-room politics, for some months later an Admiralty

order distributed the old mates to sea-going ships, and thus the air was cleared. Experience has convinced me that on board ship, at school, or elsewhere, the enforced companionship of young boys with those much older is good for neither, and inevitably leads to abuses.

I recall another relic of bygone times. The *Caledonia* had been attached to the Channel Fleet, and on returning from Ireland to the Sound it was considered inexpedient to allow leave ashore; the men, therefore, were permitted to have their so-called wives and female relatives on board for twenty-four hours. They came in hundreds, and for all description of the results I can only recall again St. Vincent's stern comment on the "horrible scenes of profligacy" which he, with so many others deplored. I am inclined to believe that this instance was the last of the kind in the Navy.

Keeping the morning watch gave me my first experience of holystoning decks in a cold winter's dawn. I stood watching the double rows of men on their knees, with lanterns before them, grinding the wet sand into the decks, when a young mate (the officer of the watch) sang out: "Off with your shoes, youngster!" I looked at his boots and demurred. A messenger was sent for a hunting-whip, and a minute later the lash was curling round my ankles, and I had gained my first insight into the sensation of gritty sand and icy water washing over a pair of shivering bare feet.

Boat-work was more interesting. You never could tell when you might come in for exciting events. I remember being sent in charge of a boat to Mutton Cove at Devonport. The *Vanguard*, an 80-gun ship, had paid off that afternoon, after four years up the

Straits; and savings banks or remittances being then unknown, the men had each received sums varying from £20 to £80. As we tossed our oars alongside the quay steps the bowman called out that there was a man in the water, and, jumping overboard, he pushed while we dragged and hauled a naked body into the boat. Life was not quite extinct, so we gave way on board, and after a while he was brought round. He had been paid off from the *Vanguard* a few hours before with £50 in his pocket, the earnings of the commission. He had been hocussed, robbed, stripped, and flung without ceremony into the tide. Such was the not uncommon but unregarded fate of poor Jack sixty-five years since.

Our education was conducted by the most lovable of naval instructors, Michael Rainback. He might have served Dickens for the original of Mr. Pickwick, with his merry eyes, twinkling behind round spectacles under his polished bald pate. His short, round figure had a springy step in its Pickwickian dress, and his clean-shaved face had lips that smacked of the generous juice of the grape. Such a man inevitably suggested practical jokes, but they were kindly. At that time "Rowland's Macassar Oil" was a fashionable concoction for promoting the growth of the hair, and it occurred to us that nowhere was it more needed than on dear old Rainback's head. In his name we wrote to Rowland, averring that he had used Macassar oil, with results so astonishing that he felt bound to express his gratitude for the luxuriant crop now decorating his former baldness. I shall never forget the arrival of a parcel containing not only a proper supply of Macassar, but also perfumes and soaps of every variety, from the grateful Rowland, with



F. Gifford.

NAVAL INSTRUCTOR OF "CALEDONIA" AND THE MIDSHIPMEN SHOOTING THE SUN ON NOONDAY SIGHTS.

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the petition that the public in general might profit by such a remarkable experience; and no one laughed louder and longer than the subject of the joke.

Our flag-captain (later Sir Alexander Milne, Bart., Admiral of the Fleet, G.C.B., and son of the Commander-in-Chief) was young for the position, and his father persisted in regarding him as quite a lad, with sometimes humorous enough effect.

I remember at a big dance at Admiralty House the dancing had proceeded merrily, but not entirely without casualties, for in those days it was the custom to wear the sword at official parties, and this, in spite of every precaution, would frequently entangle the wearer's legs, and bring both parties to the ground ignominiously.

The dance, however, had ceased when everyone's attention was attracted by the admiral's voice raised excitedly and in broad Scotch accent, as he addressed his son:

"I tell ye, Alexander, the ship shall be inspected to-morrow."

"Very well, sir," replied Captain Milne good-naturedly, "but I am afraid she will scarcely be ready, and if you could possibly make it the day after——"

Here the choleric old admiral broke in with—

"Alexander, lave the room, sir—lave the room this minute!"

And leave it Captain Milne did, then and there, gathering up his sword, and with as pleasant a face and as much dignity as any man could show in the circumstances—an object-lesson of filial obedience which could scarcely find its parallel at the present time.

A red-letter day came when we were honoured with

a visit from the young Queen. It is difficult for a generation that knew her only as the old Queen to comprehend the passion of romantic enthusiasm which her presence then inspired; but we felt it, and that day will be remembered while I live.

She came, slight, graceful, very royal in gesture and movement, her bright face glowing with interest and pleasure—the English Queen at home in her fleet. The thundering salutes and the cheering over, she made a tour of the ship, escorted by our octogenarian admiral, upright and stately, but deaf as a post. Captain Milne followed, and I, as his aide-de-camp, attended. I do not know that conversations with royalty are ever productive of much interest, but here we certainly made our fiasco.

"A fine ship this, admiral," remarked Her Majesty, rising to the occasion with spirit.

The admiral heard nothing, but bent low with his hand to his ear. The Queen spoke louder.

"A very fine ship this, admiral."

Again the tall form bent almost double to the little figure at his side, and again with infinite good-nature she repeated the compliment at the very top of her voice.

It was equally unavailing, and an uncomfortable pause followed, during which all within hearing quaked, and the admiral patiently awaited her pleasure. Captain Milne stepped quickly to his father's side and interpreted sonorously, and at last the old warrior understood and grunted:

"Yes, Your Majesty, yes—a fine ship."

But we noticed that the Queen did not hazard another remark, and only greeted further information with her own charming smile.

She then climbed on to the poop, all unconscious that she granted to us who stood on the quarter-deck a delightful glimpse of slender ankles—than which, indeed, never Queen or peasant owned more shapely. That same evening I told the events of the day to a bright girl of my acquaintance, and she interrupted me to ask:

"Now, tell the truth—were the Queen's ankles as pretty as mine?"

Alas, for the truth! Boy as I was, I grasped the situation, and said fervently:

"Not half, not a quarter, as pretty."

CHAPTER V

H.M.S. "XENOPHON"

"The hushed sea seems to hold her breath,
And o'er the giddy swaying spars,
Silent and excellent as death,
The dim blue skies are bright with stars."
Oxford Treasuries.

"Water, water everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink."
COLERIDGE.

THE *Xenophon*, an old 74, razeed and converted into a powerful 50-gun frigate, was commissioned at Devonport early in 1845 by a captain who, after rapid promotion to post rank in 1818, had been for twenty-seven comfortable years on half-pay The *Xenophon* was an important command, but since he had one brother a Cabinet Minister and another a Lord of the Admiralty, it was quite in accordance with service customs that he should be chosen. And there was the greater reason for this because the ship would be stationed in the Pacific, where at that time one of the principal employments of Her Majesty's ships was to collect gold and silver specie on the coast of Mexico, a freightage which lined the captain's pocket to some purpose.

Still, the appointment, after so long a time on shore (especially as employment might always have been had for the asking), did cause a little mild surprise, though its purpose was better understood when it leaked out that

the *Xenophon* was not for such common drudgery as three or four years of station work, but would merely go out for a freight of dollars and return. This report, never contradicted, proved to be true, though in a fashion that no one anticipated.

I was one of ten or twelve youngsters in the midshipmen's mess, besides four mates and the usual complement of civilians—twenty-four all told, in a space not so many feet long and about ten wide. The light filtered through three glass bull's-eyes; the less said about ventilation the better, and, in the steerage outside, darkness was made visible by the faint light that struggled down the hatchways. There we slept and kept our sea-chests in such comfort as may be imagined—a happy, hopeful lot, and, in truth, proud of the well-bred tone of the ship.

The senior officers were of the right sort, specially chosen, I have since thought, to balance the inexperience of the captain. Our junior lieutenant later on was William Peel, son of the Prime Minister; he was then only a lad of nineteen, but the unusual promise, so early and sadly fulfilled in later years at Lucknow, was already recognised.

His appointment was simply for the purpose of completing his sea-time, when he immediately proceeded home overland from San Blas, and received his commander's commission. The pennant hoisted, the first lieutenant and master remained to fit the ship for sea, whilst the other lieutenants dispersed to establish rendezvous at the various ports, and, with the aid of flaming posters, to attract a ship's company.

They arrived in driblets and as we could catch them; but it was four months before all was ready—about as many months, indeed, as it now takes hours—

and with flying pennant, we saw the wooded slopes of Mount Edgcumbe fade behind us.

At Rio we found three of the big Yankee frigates which had figured largely in the fratricidal war of 1812. In armament and size we had since turned the tables on their former superiority, but their crews were mostly old English men-of-war's men, and this was a circumstance naturally calculated to lead to free fights.

It led to very free fights indeed—as a matter of fact, this became the principal recreation on shore, and mischief was bound to come of it.

They met on one of these occasions, and the rough and tumble had assumed rather unusual proportions when the Brazilian police very properly tried to lay the ringleaders by the heels. This expedient (friends and foes being alike English, and blood thicker than water) had the usual result of interference in a family quarrel, for all, with one accord, made common cause against the authorities, and a glorious row ensued. The unlucky police were overpowered until a regiment of soldiers was hurried to their support with fixed bayonets, which were freely used. The bluejackets, fighting still and as keen as ever they were against the French, were many of them severely wounded as they were gradually pushed back. At this moment one of our mates, Charlie Fellowes, whose splendid strength and presence attracted notice wherever he went, ran up and placed himself at their head, holding the Brazilians in check as he retreated slowly towards the quay, where, at Phraux's Hotel, his men would be in comparative safety. He accomplished his object, and was the last man in, when a Brazilian lunged at him with his bayonet. Quick as thought, Charlie Fellowes

jumped aside, and catching the man by the wrist, literally tore his arm out of the socket and flung him on the ground.

The affair produced a diplomatic row, for the Brazilian Government immediately demanded that Charlie Fellowes should be given up to the civil authorities. I do not know how it would have ended, for indeed the situation bristled with difficulties, but that we had a sailors' resource in trouble. We "cut the knot with the end of the topsail sheet," left the place immediately, and heard no more of the matter.

In these days of the halfpenny press one shudders to think of the international complications which almost certainly would have resulted after a little industrious fanning of the flame and a few flaring headlines.

Who of his day in the service does not remember dear Charlie Fellowes, his kindly heart, and his officer-like qualities? He died vice-admiral in command of the Channel Fleet, and surely no prouder position is open to any sailor.

It used to be a saying in the old Navy that no ship could round the Horn against the fierce September gales, but we did it after a slant to 60° south, battered and torn till not a rag of spare canvas was left. We youngsters, shivering in the night watches under the icy draught from the main-trysail, did easily believe that we saw the wind devils in actual shape grinning at us from between the bitts or over the guns. At last the wind we wanted came, and plenty of it—for the Horn never gives by halves—and with every sail straining to its utmost, we fled into the quieter waters of the great Pacific.

Off the Horn we youngsters had escaped the old-

time punishment of mastheading, but our turn came. I believe we were the last in the service to suffer, for the Admiralty had given orders that it was to cease. In my diary I find the following:

"Jackson mastheaded during church-time at Callao, for telling the drummer to beat a retreat from division without orders. As church was rigged on the upper deck, Jackson occupied the position of the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft, and some ladies who had come on board manifested the extremest sympathy on seeing his little legs dangling from the cross-trees."

Again I find:

"Polglaze, Dallison, and I were mastheaded—one at each masthead, I at the mizen—for skylarking about the rigging."

The worst part of the punishment was that it extended over the following meal, and unfeeling messmates would come on deck and by unmistakable pantomime suggest their own comfortable fulness in contrast with our deplorable emptiness.

At Callao an incident occurred which was strikingly illustrative of our captain's service idiosyncrasies. Wishing to make an excursion to the Andes, he fixed upon our dear old doctor, George Burns (afterwards Inspector-General of Hospitals and Companion of the Bath), as his companion. Not very willingly, the recipient of the honour consented to accompany him. They started, furnished with guides, and all went well until they reached the Auperimac Pass. Here there is an awful chasm, which must be crossed in a wicker basket slung on ropes, while a hundred feet below a river roars and rushes through its clouds of spray. The crossing cannot be made at all save in the early morning, for with the day a wind comes up the gorge, which tosses the light bridge hither and thither, and

renders the chasm impassable. The doctor, seeing there was some risk, jumped into the basket and crossed first, the captain following. Immediately the latter was clear of the perilous conveyance, he proceeded to call his companion to account for the gross impertinence of presuming to precede his commanding officer, and requested him to state his reasons for such an unheard-of breach of etiquette.

No special reason occurring to him, the doctor, equally astonished and indignant, declined the further pleasure of his captain's company, and made his way back to the ship with all speed, while the other continued his way in lonely grandeur. On his return he immediately put the doctor under arrest to be tried by court-martial for contempt of his superior officer.

It took many days of tactful labour on the part of the first lieutenant to convince him that the charge could scarcely be sustained, and not till then was the doctor released.

It may readily be supposed that this event did not augur well for the future peace of the commission.

From Callao we were ordered to San Blas, a port on the coast of Mexico, the distance being about 2,400 miles. The average passage occupied about three weeks, and this being so, we carried more than a full supply of water, and it occurred to no one that any risk was run. Indeed, in respect of our water-supplies there had been a retrogression from the older naval days, for whilst we read that in the year 1593 Elizabeth's great admiral, Sir Richard Hawkins, known as "The Complete Seaman," had a distilling apparatus on board, and found the water so distilled to be "wholesome and sweet," we in the nineteenth century had no such safeguard, and paid dearly for our ignorance.

In the same seas, and dependent as the Elizabethan admiral himself on the winds for our motive power, our sole supply of water (once the anchor was weighed) lay in the limited quantity our tanks could carry or a chance squall might furnish. And who can compute the misery the disuse of this simple distilling apparatus had occasioned.

We left Callao on February 11, and on the eleventh day out sighted the Galapagos group, coming to an anchor in Post Office Bay, Charles Island. Here we hoped to replenish our water-tanks, and even the enjoyment of the strange beast and plant life of these most distinctive islands sank into insignificance beside the burning question of filling them. But no water could be obtained, and we came empty away. From this point our ill-luck began.

For sixteen days we were within sight of land, drifting idly to and fro, crossing and recrossing the Equator with wearying iteration. On the seventeenth day a slant of wind carried us out of sight of the islands, and we hoped we were off at last. But no; in two days' time the wind dropped again, and we lay in a motionless calm. Thirty-six days had passed, with barely one-third of the distance done. Another week, and still we were becalmed—the monotony only broken by an occasional turtle-hunt. The seventh week out, and still we longed in vain for the signs of a freshening breeze.

The sails were furled, for they were only flapping themselves threadbare against the masts and rigging with the heave of the oily sea. Coming on deck and seeing the sailless yards made it seem a mockery of anchorage in a safe and solitary port, but the illusion could not last. The sun stared vertically from a steely

sky, and under the double awnings the liquefied pitch ran from the seams, clogging our feet as we walked the deck. In the midst of such surroundings the order was given to reduce the daily allowance of water to one pint, which was served out at noon, during the men's dinner-hour. The meat consisted of salt junk, so pickled, so hard that it would take a handsome mahogany polish; or of pork that shrivelled in cooking to little more than rind. This, in fact, was the fare which inspired the well-known naval ditty:

> "Salt horse, salt horse, what brought you here,
> All the way from Portsmouth Pier?
> After many a kick and hard abuse,
> You are salted down for sailors' use."

The result of this diet naturally was that when dinner was over not a drop of water remained for the next twenty-four hours of burning heat. The few who would have saved some found it impossible, for they had no place in which to conceal it. In this strait the poor fellows had recourse to vinegar. But not merely satisfied with moistening their mouths, they mixed it with salt water and drank it freely, and the terrible effects may be imagined, as, knocked over by this horrible mixture, they rolled in agonies on the forecastle.

The officers had the same allowance, but the conditions made all the difference. Their food was not so thirst-provoking, and they could save the water, or eke it out with wine or beer; but, in spite of all this, our captain placed no limit to his own supply.

It was now decided to make for Yestafa, on the coast of Central America, an anchorage about 200 miles distant, and we arrived there when sixty days out from Callao. Words fail in describing our feelings

when we reached that wonderful coast, with its coral beach and stately palms, backed by the volcanic mountains, and saw between their deep ravines the silver plunge of stream and torrent to the sea. We thought our privations were ended, for although we could see no break in "the league-long roller thundering on the reef," we learnt from an English brig which lay there shipping a cargo of indigo that the Indians had filled their casks, and would do the same for ours. The boats were sent to seek a landing-place, but after a careful survey, the officer reported that a landing was absolutely impracticable except for the Indian canoes. The natives were appealed to, and offered to raft off a full supply of water for 1,200 dollars.

The news spread like wildfire on board, and never a doubt had we but that our thirsty souls would drink and live. We did not, however, yet know our captain. He immediately decided that the Admiralty would not sanction such an expenditure on mere water, and that a smaller bid must be made to the natives. This they resolutely refused, and he as resolutely declined to raise it.

Things having come to this pass, the very extreme course was taken of the senior officers with the surgeon waiting upon the captain, and urging him to reconsider his decision. The sufferings of the men and the heavy responsibility thus incurred were pointed out with as much plain speaking as naval discipline permits, but all in vain. Our chief was obdurate, and the order was given to get under way. The men, who would have gladly risked their lives for water, had now, without an extra drop to moisten their parched throats, to heave up the anchor and turn their backs on the land of promise as we made for the open sea. Our

hearts were all sore and sullen, and that the captain had no share in our privations added the sense of injustice to that of hardship. There are individuals to whom it seems natural that some should suffer and others enjoy; at all events, the orders he issued concerned the ship's company and not himself, and his allowance of water for all purposes remained the same as in the times of plenty. Every morning his steward used to carry the soapy water from the cabin, but half a dozen or more stalwart Joeys in their mess at the foot of the ladder were on the look-out; the vessel was dragged from him, and the contents eagerly divided among the thirsty crowd. The steward complained, but nothing came of it.

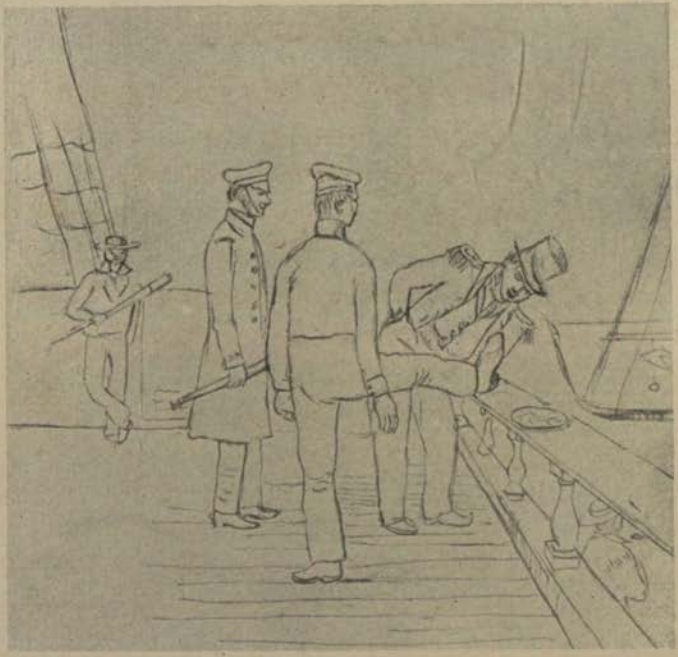
A breeze sprang up, and our hopes with it. The mountains faded in the distance, and night fell on the sails sweetly asleep as the frigate swept through the sea. We could not outsail our ill-luck. The sun rose next morning on a dead calm.

One day the clouds gathered until a huge dark mass hung in the sky. Under this the sea began to boil, and what looked like a long black arm descended from it, whilst a whirling spiral of water leaped to meet it. The cloud was full to bursting, and we knew that it must burst over us. Then out of the darkness came the blessed rain, as if the waterspout itself had fallen. Awnings were spread and looped up, hoses were led to the tanks, the scupper-holes were plugged, every receptacle was filled, and the decks became a surging lake, in which all hands rolled and drank. Past sufferings were forgotten; and though the allowance of water was still kept at a pint per day, every bucket and mess-can was full, and Jack once more cut a shuffle on the forecastle.

The seventy-seventh day from Callao found us still some 600 miles from our destination. The allowance of water now fell to half a pint daily, and our sufferings were greater than ever. Every precaution was taken to prevent the men from drinking vinegar and salt water, but it could not be stopped, and in one case the consequences were fatal. I shall never forget the funeral and the feeling of wrath and sorrow which filled our hearts as the sullen plunge was heard, and the white hammock, quivering as it sank, vanished from our sight. The whole thing was such an unnecessary, clumsy cruelty, as it seemed to us. Another grievance, keenly felt, was that the captain's live stock —sheep and poultry—were supplied all this time with no inconsiderable share of water, while British seamen were thus dying for the want of it. The situation was, I believe, only saved by his following the custom of the service, and giving the sick every day a certain amount of fresh meat from his table. I need hardly say that the officers, while their private stock of wine and beer lasted, freely shared it with their shipmates.

Tormented by thirst as the men were, it is not surprising that many attempts were made to steal water from the deck water-tank. One man would decoy the sentry away, while another rushed in and turned the tap. The sentries were doubled, and the men caught in the attempt were flogged, after the cruel custom of the time.

The strictest measures were also taken to insure the emptying of the tanks, the officer in charge having to examine each one after pumping. Still, a few drops would elude every effort, and the captain of the hold (a first-class petty officer) used to get into the tanks after the report was made, and gathering up with a sponge



F. Gifford.

SENTRY ON POOP DISTURBS THE CAPTAIN'S SIESTA—"WHY, SIR, YOU ARE SHOD LIKE A DONKEY!"



F. Gifford.

THE ARMOURER SENT FOR: A DRASTIC REMEDY.

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the small quantity of water which remained, he would fairly divide it between his messmates.

No doubt he acted improperly, but so it was, and having been discovered, he was brought before the captain on the quarter-deck. The first lieutenant having stated the offence, the prisoner, with straw hat in hand, every line of his face speaking of honesty and pluck, was asked by the captain what he meant by stealing water and thus robbing his shipmates.

"Please, yer honour," replied the man, "I only sponged up that 'ere drop to save it wasting. It weren't no good to anyone else."

"No good?" repeated the captain. "Why did you not take it to your officer?" This staggered the poor fellow. He had not thought of that, so he said nothing. Then came the sentence: "I meant to flog you, but the first lieutenant has spoken in your favour, so you will only be disrated to an A.B."

I think while the hard-earned crown and anchor were being stripped from the man's sleeve we all felt that if the objects removed had been the captain's epaulettes, justice would have been more impartially served. But there was no help for it, and we stood by and saw it done.

At last, under the influence of the land and sea breezes, we made some progress, and on May 20 sighted San Blas. Orders were immediately given to serve out a gallon of water to each man, and discipline was forgotten in the wildest, most joyful confusion as it was issued, and our privations ended, ninety-three days after leaving Callao. In the last seventy-seven days of the voyage the average speed had been just one mile an hour—a record which I scarcely think the annals of sea-life could beat.

A few months later the *Xenophon* returned to Valparaiso, finding there the *Daphne*, a beautiful 18-gun corvette, homeward bound with an unusually large freight of about three million dollars.

The Oregon question was just then acute, and war with the United States only too probable. Their naval force on the station about equalled our own, and, next to the flagship, the *Xenophon* was the most powerful unit. Her departure would immediately place our squadron in a position of inferiority; nevertheless, our captain considered the *Daphne's* freight by far the more important consideration. It was possible, he said, she might be captured by an American force on her homeward passage; and therefore, to the universal surprise and the consternation of Captain Onslow of the *Daphne*, he was ordered to tranship his freight to the *Xenophon*. It was done, and the *Xenophon* sailed at once for England, our captain receiving the rich proceeds of the freight in Captain Onslow's stead. In this way the report current on our commissioning of a speedy return was fulfilled.

The Commander-in-Chief could not accept our captain's explanations, and a court-martial was held at Portsmouth to investigate the matter. It ended in a reprimand to the captain, who shortly afterwards retired from the service. Captain Onslow, of the *Daphne*, received no compensation whatever for his loss of several thousand pounds.

I need hardly say that the type of naval officer I have here described is rare indeed. I recall few other such in naval records.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHANNEL FLEET

"Over the sea our galleys went,
With clearing prows in order brave,
To a speeding wind and a bounding wave,
A gallant armament."

BROWNING.

IN the year 1660 Mr. Samuel Pepys, of the Admiralty (and lately appointed Secretary to the two Generals of the Fleet), was writing:

"He that can fancy a Fleet like ours in her pride, with pendants loose, guns roaring, caps flying, and the loud Vive le Roys echoed from one ship's company to another, he and he only can apprehend the joy this enclosed vote was received with, or the blessing he thought himself possessed of that bore it."

The occasion was the restoration of that very worthless and witty Prince Charles II., and Mr. Pepys, with many eminent persons whose joy was equally sincere with his own, was on his way to "Schevoning" to embark the King for London.

Such was the enthusiasm of that inveterate sight-seer that he had nearly lost his power of sight-seeing for good and all, for "the gun over against my cabbin I fired myself to the King, but holding my head too much over the gun, I had nearly spoiled my right eye."

This, however, was a trifling matter at so splendid a moment. There were little awkwardnesses, to be

sure. The arms of the Commonwealth had to be pulled down throughout the ships, and the royal arms substituted, and even then remained the ominous names *Naseby*, *Speaker*, *Dunbar*, and so forth, manifestly impossible for a gracious Majesty's ear, and to be changed with all speed to *Charles*, *Henrietta*, and others of far less meaning than the stern reminders of the Ironsides and their iron age.

And so amid saluting of guns and hissing of bullets ("all very gallant," says Mr. Pepys), that fleet having accomplished its purpose and received a promise from the King of a month's pay ("I wish we had the money," is Mr. Secretary's comment), sails after many another into the past, and is seen no more.

But the vivid description of life afloat (to be read by all who love the sea) leaves me considering how little comparatively had changed between the Navy of that date and the surroundings familiar to me in my early years of service.

It may be a strong statement, but I verily believe we had more in common with the men of the *Naseby* and *Dunbar*, and could more fully share their point of view than we could that of the modern seaman, with all the appliances that have revolutionised naval warfare.

Ships, guns, personnel, all approximated far more nearly to the standard of Pepysian times than to those of the *Dreadnought*, with her attendant torpedo-destroyers and shore-haunting submarines. For between the *Naseby* and the ships of which I write (those comprising the Channel Fleet of 1845) stretched a chain with little alteration in any link—amazingly little considering the two hundred years that had elapsed. Still we waited on the wind for our propul-



M. F. Moresby.

TRIAL OF SAILING: CHANNEL FLEET, 1846.

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sion; still human labour dragged and hauled and hove, and to most minds the coming era of steam meant and foretold as little as it would have done to Pepys himself. But nevertheless the end was at hand, and this fleet was the last in which the whole tone of the antique Navy could be or ever will be found. Those who were in it witnessed the passing of the old sailor-man and the birth of the new seaman. So also in ship and gun, and from truck to keelson, and, indeed, in the whole system of the fleet.

In it the officers of a long-past generation might have found surroundings congenial and comprehensible. For the changes from the service known to that really great administrator Samuel Pepys had been so small, cautious, and gradual, that though types merged into more modern types there had never been a time when a man familiar with the past could say, "All around me is new." But now—in this fleet of 1845, which Hawke and Rodney might have handled—were the elements of change, astounding and complete, which have in a few short years entirely transformed the naval weapon of attack and defence.

Therefore the fleet is worthy of remembrance, and perhaps not wholly destitute of lesson and reminder to the younger generation, if only for the fact that with means now so contemptible in their eyes, and crews gathered up as it were by chance from the seaports, such ends had been accomplished as made a world's wonder.

For that noble gathering of line-of-battle ships which I joined in 1845 represented alike the then highest development of modern ideas and the triumphs of the old wars. Amid the older ships towered the famous *Canopus* (84 guns), taken at the Nile, and dating from

1787. She headed a few consorts of nearly the same period, and these, it was thought, could only serve as a background to exhibit the perfections of their younger sisters.

To test the rate of sailing and the sea-going qualities of the ships was the object of the fleet, and this at the very time when, unknown and unrecognised, the knell of the wind's propulsion had struck, and such a gathering would in a few years' time be as antiquated as Noah's ark. Will any man now living see in his lifetime a change as momentous? It may be, for the coming of the aeroplane may foretell the obliteration of frontiers whether by sea or land, and relegate the ocean to its solitudes once more, unfurrowed by the whirl of the screw as by the throbbing oars of the triremes.

The crews were got together from all quarters with infinite labour and cajolery, the quick completion of this part of the business depending very much upon the captain's character as it ran abroad in the seaport towns. A strict, flogging captain held his own, and secured his men without difficulty, so long as it was felt he was just and impartial, whilst captains who substituted a black list for the cat might whistle for a crew. This is a fact which modern humanitarians may explain as they will. Possibly the men felt with the discriminating schoolboy, "He is a beast, but a *just* beast"—a matter of some importance when it is remembered that no official regulations existed on the subject of punishment; the matter was left in the captain's hands. There can be no doubt also that many men preferred a short and sharp five minutes at the gangway to a long-drawn-out black list, beginning with drinking six-watered grog on the quarter-deck,

and ending with a month of carrying a hammock with two 32-pounder shot lashed in it from eight to ten every evening. I have not infrequently seen fifteen or twenty men punished in this senseless way together, and I remember a man thus weighted and compelled to stand in the quarter-deck hammock nettings who, as the commander was going on the poop, flung the hammock down, and attempted to jump overboard. The officer, with quick presence of mind, caught him by the collar, but only in the nick of time. The whole system was a bad and mistaken one, and it is good to realise that these aimless and brutal retaliations have disappeared, as they were bound to do with the higher education and civilisation of the lower deck. There is still, however, much to be understood and revised in connection with all our disciplinary punishments.

Eventually the crews were completed, and happy was the captain who, when they passed before him, recognised half as old man-of-war's men. The rest were probably riff-raff, on whom many weary months of work must be spent before they were licked into shape, and therefore much depended on the nucleus of the older hands and the example they were likely to set.

The admiral in command when I joined the fleet was Sir William Parker—the most distinguished officer of the day, and a veteran of the glorious first of June (fought fifty-two years before). His captains also dated from the old war, and were wedded to the system to which, as they believed, the country owed its magnificent victories.

The officers, with few exceptions, were content to be practical seamen only. They had nothing whatever to do with the navigation of the ship or the

rating of the chronometers. That was entirely in the hands of the master, and no other had any real experience or responsibility in the matter.

I may instance the case of a captain whose ship was at Spithead. He was ordered by signal to go to the assistance of a ship on shore at the back of the Isle of Wight. In reply, he hoisted the signal of "Inability: the master is on shore." "Are the other officers on board?" he was asked. He answered, "Yes"; and to the repeated order "Proceed immediately," he again hoisted "Inability," and remained entrenched in his determination until a pilot was sent to his assistance.

There was nothing surprising in all this, amazing as it sounds in present-day conditions, for the education of the midshipmen, apart from seamanship, consisted of the rules of thumb for working the ship's reckoning, the practical use of the sextant and artificial horizon, and even this was only obtainable in ships carrying a naval instructor. Where a gunnery lieutenant was present they were taught great gun and cutlass drill; but at least half of them serving in the smaller ships had none of these advantages, and never even added to the knowledge of arithmetic with which they had started in the service.

Mastheading had ceased, but the midshipmen were subjected to the most eccentric punishments, such as standing on the bitts, or, not infrequently, on the capstan as the anchor was being hove up, the men at the bars grinning as they whirled the hapless mite around. Another bad old custom prevailed amongst themselves which was known as "cutting out"; in other words, the midshipmen of the night watches broke into the steward's pantry (and sometimes even the ward-room

pantry was not spared), with the object of appropriating any eatables they could lay their hands on. We never regarded this as dishonesty. It was a buccaneering expedition, which brought a certain amount of honour and glory to its successful exponents, as the following parody current in the gun-room will prove :

"I dreamt that I stood on the *Monarch's* decks,
With the youngsters by my side;
And of all the flower of the cutters-out,
That I was the hope and pride.

"I dreamt, though things are not what they seem,
I had collared the whole of a fowl;
And I also dreamt the jovial dream
That I found some grog in a bowl.

"Then I dreamt that one of the hungry host
Stood forth my fowl to claim;
But I also dreamt (which pleased me most)
That I wolfed it all the same."

This "cutting-out," by the way, cost the service one of its most brilliant intellects—James Hannay, afterwards consul at Barcelona. He left it when a midshipman as the result of what was simply a hungry boy's frolic. A truly remarkable man—editor, essayist, scholar, and novelist. No better picture of the Navy at this time can be found than in his books, but all his thoughts and speech concerning it were touched with a certain bitterness that was possibly the result of this early experience.

This was quite in the Marryat vein, as far as "the young gentlemen" were concerned; but it was all of a piece. The ships themselves were armed, equipped, and disciplined on the same lines as those which fought with Jervis.

Even uniform had not settled into a routine. There

were no distinctive marks of rank except the epaulette and gold band. In one ship you would see tail-coats, epaulettes, and tall chimney-pot hats, decorated with gold lace, looped to a button. In another the senior officers would appear in round jackets, with epaulettes, and blue cloth caps with a gold band, to which in smart ships a gold chin-stay might be added.

Amongst the men the common dress of seamen was general, but vagaries, owing to the whim of a captain, here and there were to be seen. I remember the crew of the *Caledonia*, in compliment to her name, appearing in a Scotch cap, decorated with a tartan band, and with the oddest effect imaginable. The only wonder was that the line was drawn at kilts.

Things were all as they had drifted in happy-go-lucky fashion, and the Navy had not begun consciously to consider either its virtues or its shortcomings. But, as I say, change was in the air, and heated discussions raged between the partisans of the modern ships and the stanch upholders of the old order. This, and the question of which ship was smartest in exercise aloft, occupied those who thought at all. No one considered gunnery beyond the points of rapid loading and firing, for it was believed that every action would be at close quarters. Nor was any account taken of the paddle-wheel steamers attached to the fleet. They were "dirty smoke-jacks," and might possibly be of some use in towing—that was all; and there was a certain amount of reason here, for it was evident that the cumbrous paddle-wheel and the revolving cranks several feet above the upper deck must be rendered useless by one well-placed shot or shell. There was obviously no future for this type in the service, and sails would continue to waft us as they had

done from the beginning. So we thought. A little later, however, a long, low craft, barque-rigged, and possessing no outward sign of a steamship but the funnel, joined the fleet, and attracted universal attention. She was the *Rattler*, the first man-of-war screw-ship, of 880 tons, and 200 horse-power, carrying 11 guns.

Pitted against her in every trial was the *Alecto*, a paddle sloop of equal tonnage and horse-power, the *Rattler* easily beating *Alecto* in all circumstances. Finally, a definite trial was ordered, and they were lashed stern to stern in a "pull-devil-pull-baker" grip, and ordered to put forth all their strength to see which would succeed in towing the other. Well do I remember the scene. It was a calm day, with a long heaving swell. *Alecto's* paddles were revolving and churning the foam like a whale in a flurry; a slight ripple under the *Rattler's* stern alone showed there was power at work; but it was power to some purpose, though so little demonstrative. *Alecto* was dragged steadily astern at the rate of two and a half knots an hour, and the doom of paddle-wheels was sealed. Not many days later another convincing proof was given. The *Rattler* was ordered to take station on the weather quarter of the old *Canopus*, and both ships ran before a fresh gale for the fleet rendezvous. In these circumstances, according to the experience of all old seamen, *Canopus* should have run a small sloop out of sight; but it did not come off. The *Rattler*, under a rag of a topsail, kept her station easily. At the close of the day the Captain of *Canopus* signalled his surprise thus: "Never saw a ship of your tonnage equal to you."

The long, lean, flat floor of the new-comer had done

the trick. Yet the performance passed out of our minds We had not realised that she had doomed our white wings as well as the clumsy paddles of the "smoke-jacks." Indeed, I think the mental attitude of those days differed from these chiefly in the curious and unexpectant manner in which any possibility of change or novelty was met. It was natural enough. We had not become accustomed to the quick clash of opinion, nor to the succession of many inventions, one supplanting the other, which would be bewildering if they had not almost exhausted the human capacity for wonder.

Even later steam was considered by the old school to be more of a complication than an assistance. There is a venerable yarn of a captain, affectionately known as "Johnny," and a member of a very old Cornish family, which illustrates its difficulties. Running up harbour under steam and sail, he shortened sail and came to an anchor in handsome style so far as that was concerned, but unfortunately kept his engines going, with disastrous result. Standing on the bridge, he was heard to lament in his West-Country drawl, with its illimitable "e's": "O deere, O deere! I forgot I waur a steamer!"

So, when the signal flew, "Prepare to try rate of sailing," the *Rattler* was forgotten, and it was a matter of as much moment as if sails were to be the means of transit for ever.

A typical trial took place off Lisbon in August, 1847. The beautiful little *Eurydice* (the same that, thirty-three years later, went down with all hands off the Isle of Wight) was sent fifteen miles to leeward and hove to. The rest of the fleet, eight sail of the line and four frigates, were formed in line abreast and

waited. The Symonites (*i.e.*, the modern ships, built by Captain Sir W. Symons, R.N.), *Queen*, *Albion*, *Superb*, and *Vanguard*, were to compete with the old *Hibernia*, *Trafalgar*, *Rodney*, and *Canopus*. The frigates were flyers by themselves. A fresh breeze and smooth water favoured the modern ships. At the signal the helms were put up, and, with studding sails on both sides, the liners raced round *Eurydice* and beat back to the starting-point. We shall not see such a sight again, neither we nor our children. There are others well worthy the delight of a sailor, but those winged and beautiful creatures of the ocean are gone; and how much of the romance of the sea, from *Argo* downwards, they have taken with them only those who have seen the old and the new can judge. For they went with the wind's and the sea's will, or, with an infinitely feminine grace and dexterity, outwitting and evading, while seeming to obey, the conditions of their environment. There is grandeur in the thrust of a steel mass against the staggering weight of storm and ocean, forced onward by the dogged power of steam; but the snowy pyramid, leaning up into the blue of the sky or shuddering down close-reefed into nothingness against the skeleton outline of masts and yards before the onslaught of the gale, made as inevitable a call on human sympathy as the full-plumaged or the wounded flight of a bird.

It was soon evident that the golden apple lay between *Superb* and the old *Canopus*. In the run down *Superb* gained 80 yards, and, reaching *Eurydice*, she shortened sail, reefed, and braced up as smartly as could be. But she had a smarter ship behind her. Quick as thought, *Canopus* saw there was room left to shoot up on *Superb's* weather-beam; so, with studding-

sail sheets flying and yards grinding up, she scraped *Eurydice's* spanker-boom, and shot up to windward of her rival, turning her gain on the run down into dead loss. Then came the beat back. The hammocks were piped down, and everyone turned in with a 32-pound shot for a bed-fellow, since the swing of the weight (it was thought) accelerated the speed. The sea got up, and that suited the French-built liner as she fled home "sweeping the crests like a seagull." Therefore, at the close of the day, when the admiral signalled, "Take up stations in order of sailing," *Canopus* had beaten *Superb* by 50 yards, and the rest of the fleet, led by *Vanguard*, were from 2,000 to 6,000 yards astern. I was young enough to rejoice because of the old fighter's long and glorious history, and half to believe that ghosts in queue and epaulette, very stiff and scarred and weather-beaten, might walk the quarter-deck that night when the moon was up, and be proud that she still could hold her own on the seas they had swept so often. The final report of the admiral placed *Canopus*, *Superb*, and *Vanguard* as equal in sailing; the rest of the fleet nowhere.

The competition between the ships in exercise aloft was as keen—almost unbelievable to a generation for which the word "aloft" has lost its meaning. Wonderful and thrilling were the records gained by constant practice, combined with every dodge known to officers and men. The fleet, lying with lower yards and topmasts struck, would (the smartest) have their royal-yards across in less than five minutes, and the rest would not be far behind. Boats were hoisted out, manned, armed, and sent away on service in twenty minutes. All very well in its way, but it had a disastrous side to it as well. To obtain this polish of

efficiency it was the custom to exercise the men after evening muster, when Jack, under the influence of his supper grog, was reckless and excited with rivalry. This led to a number of fatal accidents. Indeed, in one ship no less than eight lives were lost in a fortnight. Of course, this was unprecedented, and the men's nerves got so jumpy as a result that drill aloft had to be abandoned for a while. But what would the Press of to-day have had to say to such a butcher's bill?

The last accident was singular in its effect. The topsails had been three times double reefed and furled, but not to the commander's satisfaction. The last time a man, quivering with eagerness, missed his hold, fell, and was instantly killed. The yards were just about to be lowered a fourth time. A dead silence ensued. The work stopped, no one moved, and every eye turned to the commander. It was one of those moments when discipline hangs visibly in the balance, and human nature may tilt the scale without a moment's warning. He, too, paused for a long moment, looked at the cruel mark on the snowy deck, then quietly and in a subdued manner gave the order: "Trim the yards! Call the watch!" and an inaudible stir of relief ran round the clustering men, swarmed as they were like bees in the rigging.

A pleasant change from the fleet cruisers and competitors was a run to the West Indies on a round of troop service. Starting from Gibraltar, we conveyed some 450 officers and men to Jamaica. It was jovial work for us all, for the soldiers were young and good fellows in every sense of the word; but to our old purser it was nothing less than a godsend, for the system still prevailed under which the purser re-

ceived nominal pay of from £50 to £90 a year, and made his pickings on every article of food or clothes required by the men. It was, indeed, roughly calculated that a purser might reckon each man as £1 a year to his income, and therefore in a line-of-battle ship, with 900 or 1,000 men, he was by far the best-paid officer. It was a radically bad business, and led to much mean, if not dishonest, practice. I remember an absurd instance at Jamaica. The captain was away, and the commander gave us permission to have a Dignity ball (familiar to all readers of Marryat) on board. For this occasion we needed a good supply of purser's dips to light up the quarter-deck; but the purser was on shore, and the steward, in his absence, was ordered to supply them. Music, dancing, and fun were in full swing when the purser came alongside, and, reaching the quarter-deck, his avaricious eye fell upon perhaps a hundred of his dips flickering under the awnings. It was too much for him to bear. Rage for a moment kept him silent, then, rushing round the deck with a sputter of fury, he blew out every dip in succession, until, sinking perfectly exhausted into a chair, he swore we were all in a conspiracy to cheat him out of his honourable profits. The commander, equally exhausted with laughter at his antics, our concern, and the sudden collapse of the festivities into darkness, reasoned with him, to some eventual purpose, and dip by dip we extracted a little light. Our dark bright-eyed partners remarked that "Massa purser he berry angry," and then in their easy gaiety, forgetting the whole thing, they danced on till the last dip had flickered and gone out.

"Blood," said Mrs. Micawber on a celebrated occasion, "cannot be obtained from a stone"; and, with



F. Gifford.

MIDSHIPMEN'S BATHING PARTY: A WARM RECEPTION AT ALGECIRAS BAY BY CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER.

To face p. 78.

honourable exceptions, it was certainly very difficult to get any liberality from a purser.

Returning from Halifax to England, we resumed our place in the Channel Fleet; but late in 1847 political events recalled the Commander-in-Chief to the Mediterranean, accompanied by nearly all his ships We were glad to exchange the monotonous sailing off Lisbon for the bright waters and delightful cruises of the new station.

CHAPTER VII

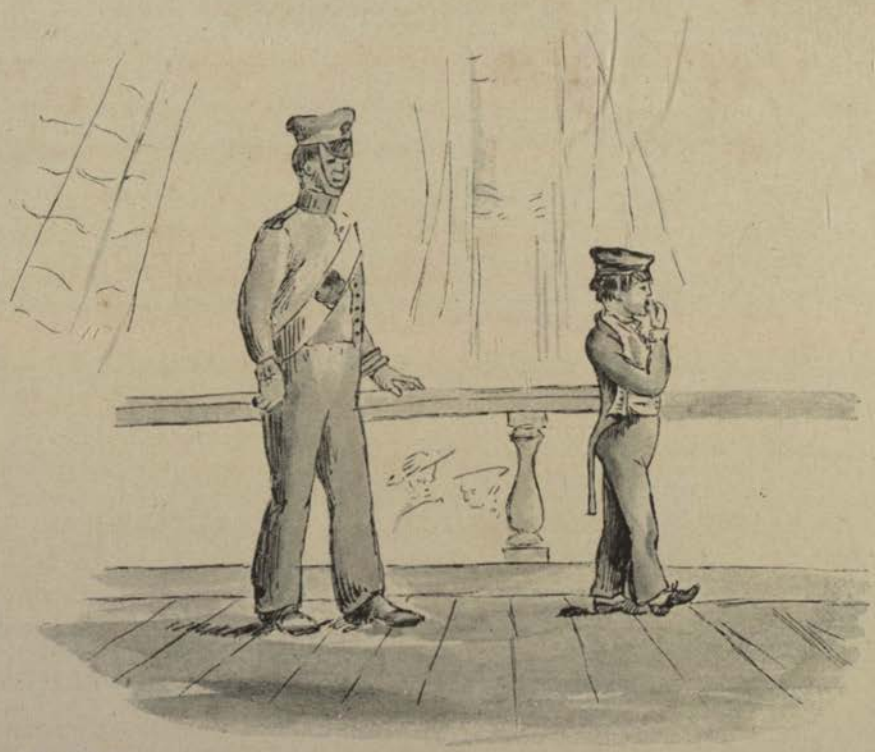
H.M.S. "ODIN"

"So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness; and yet thine heart
The lowliest burdens on herself did lay."

WORDSWORTH.

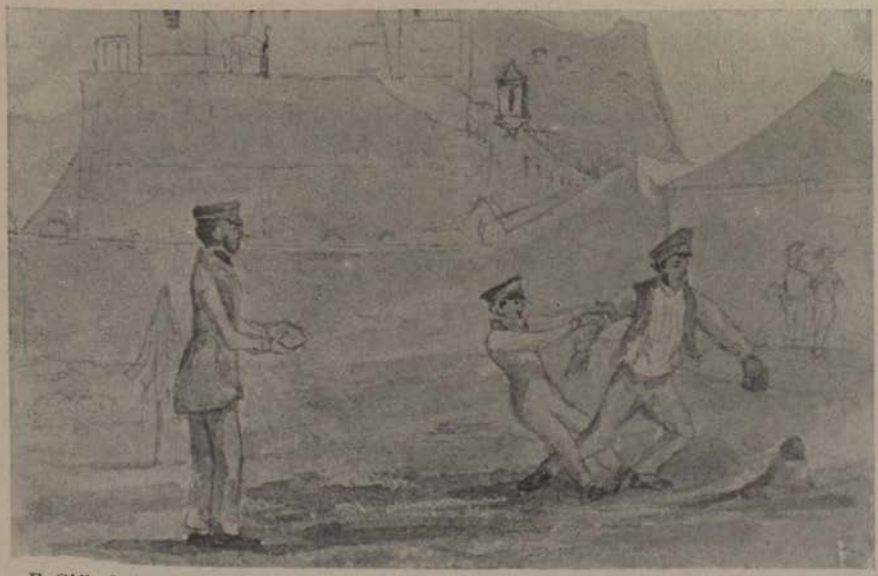
I WAS lucky in being appointed to the *Odin* (steam frigate). She was a paddle-wheeler of 1,310 tons, 500 horse-power, and 16 guns, ten of which on the main-deck were practically useless; but on the upper-deck her two heavy 10-inch pivot guns and four long 32-pounders were useful weapons. She was fully rigged as a barque, and I remember that our great ambition was to rival the sailing-ships in all their manœuvres and drills.

Our captain—the Hon. Frederick Pelham—was a representative of the best type of the well-born naval officer. Still in his thirties, tall and good-looking, to an outside observer he appeared too indifferent to take much interest in the routine of his profession; but this conventional manner covered the keenest anxiety that his officers and men should fulfil his own high ideals. For them and their interests he was kind and thoughtful, and he had (more than any captain I ever sailed with) mastered the secret of communicating his own fine seamanship and professional knowledge through his first lieutenant, while keeping himself in the back-



F. Gifford.

A YOUNGSTER'S BIRTHDAY UNDER THE SENTRY'S CHARGE ON THE POOP.



F. Gifford.

DUCK-STONE AT LISBON.

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ground. His influence was supreme, though he never seemed to exert it, and to us youngsters he was most winning. He would walk up and down with us in our watches, and, saying little, would yet somehow contrive to make us feel that we too had our share in the honour of the service, whilst a word of praise from him was worth working for all day. Those who fell under his rebuke were pitiable indeed. Yet all was done so quietly. I remember a clerk who had ornamented his office with pictures which, to put it charitably, were rather more than vulgar. The captain noticed them on his rounds of inspection. With his glass in his eye he looked at them and then at the culprit, and it was quite enough: the pictures disappeared immediately. Thinking of Pelham I recall a *man*, and grow almost as enthusiastic as I was in those long-ago days.

That he should have chosen Charlie Wake for his first lieutenant was an anomaly which it took a good deal of understanding of both men to explain. It was true that Wake was the representative of a family descended from the famous Hereward the Wake, with his device of the monk's knot and its allusive motto "Vigila et ora," but that kind of thing by itself would never influence the captain. Unusually young for his post, short and short-sighted, he was, like his great ancestor, a pocket Hercules, driven by an untiring impulse of energy. His extreme short-sightedness led him into the most ludicrous collisions with men and things, a kind of helplessness in itself lovable, whilst his good-nature, pluck, and true sailor's heart made everyone his friend. There was a deeper side to his character as well. Without making any pretence, or, indeed, knowing or reasoning much on the

subject, he had a right God-fearing strain in him, and the standard set in the ship was invaluable.

We had no chaplain, but the captain took Divine service, and I desire no better nor more reverent rendering. On these occasions we, sitting in our chairs, would see the bullet head of our first lieutenant bowed in his hands as he knelt at the prayers, absorbed in devotion. When in port his chief pleasure was to get boatloads of children on board for such a skylark as they never before had had, or could hope for with anyone else. No one spoke or thought of Charlie Wake as a religious man any more than they did of the captain, but all felt that in their presence foul thought and deed were ashamed. Charlie Wake it was who, some eighteen years later, did as brilliant a bit of fighting as later days record. He was in command of the *Bulldog* steam-sloop, safeguarding British interests during a rebellion at Haiti, when the Haitians seized the British Consulate at Cape Haitian, and shot those that had taken refuge there. Wake demanded satisfaction, but, being refused, steamed into the port, and engaged a series of batteries at point-blank range with successful results. Unfortunately, in trying to ram a rebel steam-sloop, the *Bulldog* ran on a reef in the harbour, and remained fast. Even in this desperate plight she sank the war-vessel with her fire, and kept her superiority over the batteries until night fell, when, there being no chance of refloating the ship and the ammunition all gone, she was set on fire and blown up, the officers and men escaping in a friendly steamer. It recalls the great Sir Richard Grenville in Tennyson's noble "Ballad of the Fleet":

> "Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
> Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

The action naturally aroused much enthusiasm at home, *Punch* commemorating it in a full-page cartoon, with the following lines:

"Then here's three cheers for Captain Wake, and while we sail the sea
May British *Bulldogs* always find Captains as stout as he,
That's all for biting when they bite, and none for bark or brag,
And think less of court-martials than the honour of the flag!"

A complete foil to Wake was the junior lieutenant, Harry Lambert. He had a first-cousin in the service, and the two were generally known as Rowley Lambert and Holy Lambert. Ours was Holy Lambert, and however derisive the nickname may have been originally, none more applicable to his saintly character could have been found. It found expression in his quiet face, lit up by the kindest smile. As an officer he was absolutely trustworthy, but his perfervid desire to help his fellow-creatures sometimes overleaped the mark. I recall a droll instance. We were at Naples in the latter part of 1847, when the great Egyptian Ibrahim Pasha (who, while travelling in Europe, had been appointed Viceroy of Egypt) arrived, and the *Odin* was ordered to convey him to Alexandria. He took possession of the captain's cabin, and I need hardly say that this famous Oriental, so remarkable for military genius, statesmanship, and for the terrible cruelties with which rumour credited him, excited our liveliest interest. To us he showed the most dignified courtesy, and always had several of the officers as table companions. A few days after his embarkation it was noticed that his *chef*, the head of his kitchen department, had a most woebegone and crestfallen appearance. There was clearly something very wrong, and Lambert, whose heart could resist no appeal to

its compassion, made stringent inquiry. He was given to understand that the man had incurred the Pasha's most serious displeasure, and would, on arrival at Alexandria, be immediately bowstrung. It was a horrifying story, but on the face of it likely enough to be true; and as the news spread rapidly, everyone made occasion to walk past the poor beggar's cabin to gratify curiosity with a peep at the victim.

But Lambert did more. He set seriously to work to save the man's life. He consulted Wake, who declared death as the penalty for a fault committed on board a British man-of-war was unthinkable, and the two proceeded to Captain Pelham, and in full trust and confidence begged his intercession with the Pasha. The captain also made inquiries, but the evidence being necessarily in Turkish, only complicated things further, though the general belief corroborated the story. Accordingly, the captain requested a formal interview for his two lieutenants, who with much anxiety laid the case before the Pasha.

It took time to make him comprehend its bearings, but when he did he was petrified with astonishment. Dead silence ensued, during which all the parties involved stared at each other in bewilderment. Then, bursting into a loud "Allah!" he caught the two by the hand, and assured them with the most convincing fervour that he knew how to value a good *chef* far too well to bowstring him, and, in fact, such were his sauces that there was no crime he might not commit with impunity; in brief, some grotesque mistake had been made. Lambert rushed from the presence to make further inquiry, and at length the truth emerged. The victim had developed an extremely painful sore throat, and his pantomimic pointings, combined with



F. Gifford.

AT ALEXANDRIA: JACK CRITICISED AND CRITICISING.

To face p. 84.

the most afflicting sighs and groans and his fear of the Pasha's displeasure at his enforced idleness, had started the whole yarn. I never saw Lambert more relieved. When we reached Alexandria so bountiful were the Pasha's presents of remembrance that he was ever after known on board as "good old Ibrahim," and nothing would have persuaded us that he was capable of bow-stringing the veriest scoundrel. But I am not so sure now.

Lambert's career was brief. He became gunnery lieutenant of the *Edinburgh*, and four years later, I, on the coast of North-West Mexico, received a letter of wise counsel from him. Before it reached my hands he was dead—drowned at Spithead. A brave man, and fit alike for life or death. His memory has been an encouraging influence to me, as to many others.

The year 1848 brought with it revolutionary disturbances and outbreaks in every European country. This necessitated the scattering of the fleet, for each port demanded a man-of-war to insure the safety of British subjects.

We remained at Palermo during the long negotiations when England endeavoured to induce Bomba to grant the unfortunate Sicilians some sort of constitution. We enjoyed the utmost popularity—every sort of attention was lavished upon us, and expeditions in the country with festivities in the city combined to "fleet the time." We shared in their detestation of the Bourbon, and saw with regret that the Sicilians depended far more on English help than on their own efforts.

At last it became a certainty that Filangieri, Bomba's merciless general, who had already destroyed Catania with bloodshed and pillage, was marching on Palermo

with a force of 20,000 men. Then—and too late—the whole city turned out to dig trenches and to take the measures for defence which might have served if they had been considered six months earlier.

Ladies of the highest rank set the example, and were to be seen with their families handling pickaxes and spades, and shouting "Death to the Bourbons!"

Incidentally our popularity came to a full stop, for we received orders to observe the strictest neutrality, a degree of caution which was far indeed from realising the hopes of our friends.

The Neapolitan army approached rapidly, and there were but 15,000 men, ill-armed and worse disciplined, to meet them, neither were the harbour forts in a state of defence. There was nothing for the unfortunate Sicilians but surrender, or hopeless resistance, with the certainty of the bloody reprisals experienced at Catania to follow. They chose the former, and on April 15 we watched the long line of Neapolitan troops marching into Palermo. The national flag disappeared, and Bomba's iniquities began their evil course again, until finally crushed twenty years later by the heroism of Garibaldi. Meanwhile, the Sicilian national leaders took refuge on board the *Odin*, and we conveyed them to Malta, where they were safe from the Bourbon clutches.

I had now completed my nineteenth birthday, and six years sea-service. Captain Pelham would not hear of a day being wasted, for, as he very truly said, "One day's seniority may make all the difference in the future in your professional career." Accordingly, a midshipman (who had once before been rejected) and I, with the logs and certificates for our naval life under our arms, went with anxious hearts on board the *Powerful*, of

84 guns, commanded by the Hon. R. S. Dundas, the senior of my passing captains. Those six years had seen a considerable addition to the requirements for a lieutenant's commission, for the theory of navigation and a knowledge of gunnery, musket and cutlass drill had been added. However, thanks to Captain Pelham, I had been well worked up in these subjects, and had successfully achieved them before appearing in the presence of my examiners for the final test in seamanship.

The best might fail here, for the idiosyncrasies of the captain and the temperament of the candidate are the chief factors. Naval legends record a case where a quaking youngster appeared before a captain notorious for his rejections. After preliminaries, this was the conundrum he propounded:

"You are officer of the watch, sir. It is blowing fresh, and you are under double-reefed topsails and top-gallant sails. Mark that! The captain comes on deck and asks you how the wind is. You make the proper response. He then puts his hand into his pocket and produces a small leather case. Mark that! He opens it and presents you with a cigar. Now, sir—quick!—which end would you put in your mouth? Quick! which end?"

The youngster instantly replied:

"The twisted end if a Havana, sir, and either end if a cheroot!"

"Right, by gad, sir! You have passed an excellent examination. You have presence of mind. I have no further questions to ask."

My captains—some of whom might have been examined by that very individual—were not of his description, and, as they were much less easy to

satisfy, my agony was long-drawn. But eventually they paid me a compliment, and signed my passing certificate, which testified that I was adequate to take charge of a watch on board any of Her Majesty's ships at sea. I understood how to knot, splice, and reef; I was able to manage a ship in all situations, to rig and steer her, to get tops and caps overhead, to raise and secure sheers, etc., etc., and was consequently deemed fully capable of filling the situation of lieutenant in Her Majesty's fleet.

Reading this in the light of after-experience, I am conscious that it was perhaps as well for Her Majesty's ships that my ability to manage them in all situations was not to be fully tested until a few more years had gone over my head. I do not recall that this thought was prominent at the moment; indeed, I chiefly remember a feeling of pride at the list of accomplishments which I had scarcely suspected myself of possessing. My fellow-sufferer was successful also, and that night the midshipmen's mess was a land flowing with champagne and congratulation. There were some flowers of speech also. I remember one from Paddy Orr, our sole representative of Ireland: "You said you wouldn't pass, but I knew better. I knew you were lying low. Shallow waters run deep." Our burst of laughter wound up the festivities, for the master-at-arms came with his "Lights out, gentlemen!" and we all turned into our hammocks and slept as only such lads can.

It is a strange reflection that of the merry company all but myself have heard the final order "Lights out!" and are sleeping a longer and sounder sleep, with a brighter dawn in prospect.

A few months later I was ordered to England for examination in gunnery at the Naval College.



F. Gifford.

LOWER-DECK HORNPIPE.



F. Gifford.

MIDSHIPMEN'S POLKA ON THE QUARTER-DECK.

To face p. 88.

CHAPTER VIII

H.M.S. "EXCELLENT"

"This be the verse you grave for me:
'Here he lies where he longed to be—
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.'"

R. L. STEVENSON.

AN appointment to the *Excellent* is now a prize to be striven for, but in the forties the gunnery authorities were glad to secure acting mates, and even senior unpassed midshipmen, on condition of remaining to study for gunnery when they had qualified at the Naval College as lieutenants.

It was with this understanding that I joined the *Excellent* as an acting mate in 1849. At the same time came William Elrington Gordon (an unpassed midshipman), of whom, should any old shipmate read these reminiscences, he will say: "A more able man there could scarcely be; a more lovable one there certainly never existed."

In the next batch for the gunnery examination there were sixteen, some of whom had two years' acting lieutenant's time depending upon the result, the risk being that if unsuccessful all acting time was forfeited, and the unfortunate became once more a midshipman. One of our number, whose ability, indeed, was unquestioned, from some unaccountable cause failed in

this way and lost the two precious years. He had the pluck, however, to retrieve the situation, and died an admiral.

However, we all pulled through the manual part, and were then summoned before Captain Chads (commanding the *Excellent*) for the final *viva voce.* There was no abler nor kinder examiner, but he possessed, or rather was possessed by, a perfectly volcanic energy, which exploded with exterminating results when it encountered opposition. Such an event occurred on this occasion, illustrating also the extent of mathematical knowledge to be expected from a youngster brought up in the shade of small craft without the advantage of a naval instructor.

X was asked what proportion the charge of a 68-pounder cannonade bore to the shot. After deep reflection he hazarded: "One twenty-fifth, sir," with a hopeful eye on the captain. "Oh, Mr. X, think again, think again!" was the exhortation. X did think again, if such a process can be so described, but ever wider of the mark. Finally he was told it was one-twelfth. "Now, then, Mr. X, what is the answer?" X reflected still more deeply, but the conundrum was beyond him, and the kindly chief said in prompting tones: "Come now, what is the twelfth part of sixty-eight?" I shall never forget his countenance when, with a ray of intelligence lightening his dulness, X replied: "Twenty, sir." The captain stared aghast, and, unfortunately, in the breathless silence I broke into laughter, in which the others surreptitiously joined. But I was the victim. "Leave the cabin, sir!" the chief shouted, "and never dare to enter it again." One does not argue with the captain when his arms are gyrating in the air and his face is scarlet with fury.

I found myself contemplating a shut door with a sense that X had, perhaps, on the whole made less of an ass of himself than I. It took all the diplomacy and mediation of the gunnery lieutenant (an old shipmate of mine) and a very chastened demeanour on my own part to effect another entry.

The final examination at the Naval College followed. Professor Main, a Senior Wrangler and Smith's Prize-man, was at its head, yet it was purely rule-of-thumb, working out a college sheet of ordinary nautical problems with the aid of Inman's tables, whilst our skill in using the sextant was tested by the venerable feat of measuring the angle between two well-known Portsea chimneys. None of the college authorities signed or commented on our papers. This was left to the admiral commanding at Portsmouth and the captain of the *Excellent*, and to the awful presence of these high officials we were summoned to receive our certificates. It had leaked out that four were unsuccessful, and, our names being read in order of merit as we grouped round the table, it was curious to see face after face clear up into satisfaction until the last four stood crestfallen at the bottom of the class. Sir Bladen Capel, who fifty-three years before had carried Nelson's despatches of the Battle of the Nile, presented our certificates, and this interesting veteran did not forget to compliment Gammell, who stood at the head of our list, nor more warmly the second in order—the son of a great family—who shortly after received his promotion, the better man having to wait three years.

After a few weeks' leave I returned to the *Excellent* to begin the year's course for a gunnery officer. A little later joined James Graham Goodenough, destined to fill so bright a page in naval annals. Very naturally

he and Gordon became fast friends, and leaders of a group of men whose object was to strengthen the aim of their own lives and to help others to do the same. Goodenough's commanding talents, his popularity and excellence as an athlete, insured attention from the most careless. He did not wear his heart on his sleeve, but he never wavered from his determination to help the seamen and boys of the ship to the knowledge of the higher life. Such he was as a young man. In most cases these youthful hopes and energies are dispersed in many channels, and run to waste in the sandy deserts of life; in his, experience confirmed and concentrated them. When as commodore commanding on the Australian station he lay dying, shot by the poisoned arrows of savages, those characteristics culminated in one supreme effort. He caused himself to be carried to the quarter-deck, and the ship's company to be summoned that he might bid them all farewell. There, with his failing strength, he pointed them to the Guiding Star of his own life—that Star which never shone more serenely than in the hour of his death. He entreated them to resist temptations —those temptations so lavishly spread in the sailor's way—by remembering and clinging to "the unfathomable love of God," adding: "Before I go back to die, I should like you all to say, 'God bless you!'" This with one voice and very earnestly they did, and he replied: "May He bless you with such happiness as He has given me!" He shook hands with all the petty officers, having a special word for each, and was then carried, exhausted, but in perfect contentment of spirit, to his cabin, saying: "I suppose there is nothing now to be done but to die quietly." There was indeed no more, and on the following day he answered to the

high recall which for him could never come too late nor too early.

"Our island in many ways is marvellous, and such as men come far to see; laden she is with riches, and guarded with great force of men. Yet seems she to have held within her bounds nothing than this man more noble; nothing more holy, wonderful, and dear." —LUCRETIUS.

I think it is well that men should consider and remember this scene of heroic valediction—unparalleled, as far as my memory goes, in the service. To quote the great Dean of Westminster's stately words: "For Goodenough self was absorbed in duty, duty was transfigured into happiness, and death was swallowed up in victory."

Gordon and Goodenough passed into the Naval College to compete for the lieutenant's commission, then the yearly prize for the scientific young men. The competition interested us keenly, for while the affection that bound them was like that of David and Jonathan, their emulation was full of zest. The prize went to Goodenough, and it was a wholesome sight in this difficult world to see the unfeigned congratulations of the loser, and the equally unfeigned regret of the winner that the triumph could not be divided.

The *Excellents* of the present day, with their scientific surroundings and sumptuous accommodation, may find it hard to realise the lot of their predecessors in the forties; but they need only look at the noble old *Victory*, and they will see in her the *Excellent* of times gone by. She accommodated on the lower deck some 600 men training for gunners, messing between the long 32-pounders as in a sea-going ship. Aft on the lower deck the old gun-room was divided by a fore and

aft bulkhead. On the starboard side it formed the mess place for some twenty mates, and on the port side they slung their hammocks and stowed their sea-chests. A precious Babel it was in the mornings when we turned out, chattering like starlings, and did what washing was possible in the tin basins on our chests. Luckily there was a big entry port on the lower deck cut down to near the water-line, from which we used to take a header, and then rush to our chests and get our big Joey servants to rub us down. It was half an hour's confusion of lithe young men laughing and shouting and running about half dressed, and the stiff, painstaking marines steadily looking after their respective masters.

Under the poop was the mathematical study for all officers, and here a menagerie of diverse pupils confronted dear old Stark, our Scottish instructor. But nothing could disturb his Scots phlegm except a break in his invariable routine, such as when an inveterate joker extracted the nail on which for many a year the Starkian coat and hat were hung when he arrived on board. This ruffled him, and his mind wavered in patient bewilderment as he looked round and helplessly exclaimed: "Eh, mon—what's this? Eh, where is it gone?" until even the culprit's heart relented, and he slid the nail back into its hole where the seeking hand could find it.

In this, the most important part of our training, we were left entirely to our own devices. There was no attempt at classification or examination. The industrious who cared to work were helped; the majority who did not pleased themselves, and escaped under a pretence by once in the forenoon ceremoniously carrying a problem up for explanation—

a thirst for knowledge which apparently satisfied the authorities. Nor was there any stimulus, for the final certificates were so graduated into classes and subdivided into grades that to obtain a 3·3 required little more knowledge than rule-of-three, while to obtain a 1·1 meant a thorough knowledge of mathematics, and both equally qualified the holders to become gunnery officers, and made no manner of difference to their future advancement. So that, as Lord Melbourne said in connection with the august Order of the Garter, there was really "no d——d merit" whatever to complicate the whole extraordinary system.

The rest of the day was occupied in our various classes, interrupted once a week by first quarters, when officers and men competed at great-gun drill. The guns were secured for sea, and the decks cleared. Then, as the stirring drums beat to quarters, with a rush that made the old ship tremble, each crew took up its station, and proud was the one which, after loading and running out, first stood to attention. Generally, but not by any means always, this would be the officers' gun, and so also in the following evolutions.

It was a fine struggle, and the big guns flew from one end of the ship to another like playthings. A crushed finger still reminds me how severely a bit of clumsiness could be punished at such times.

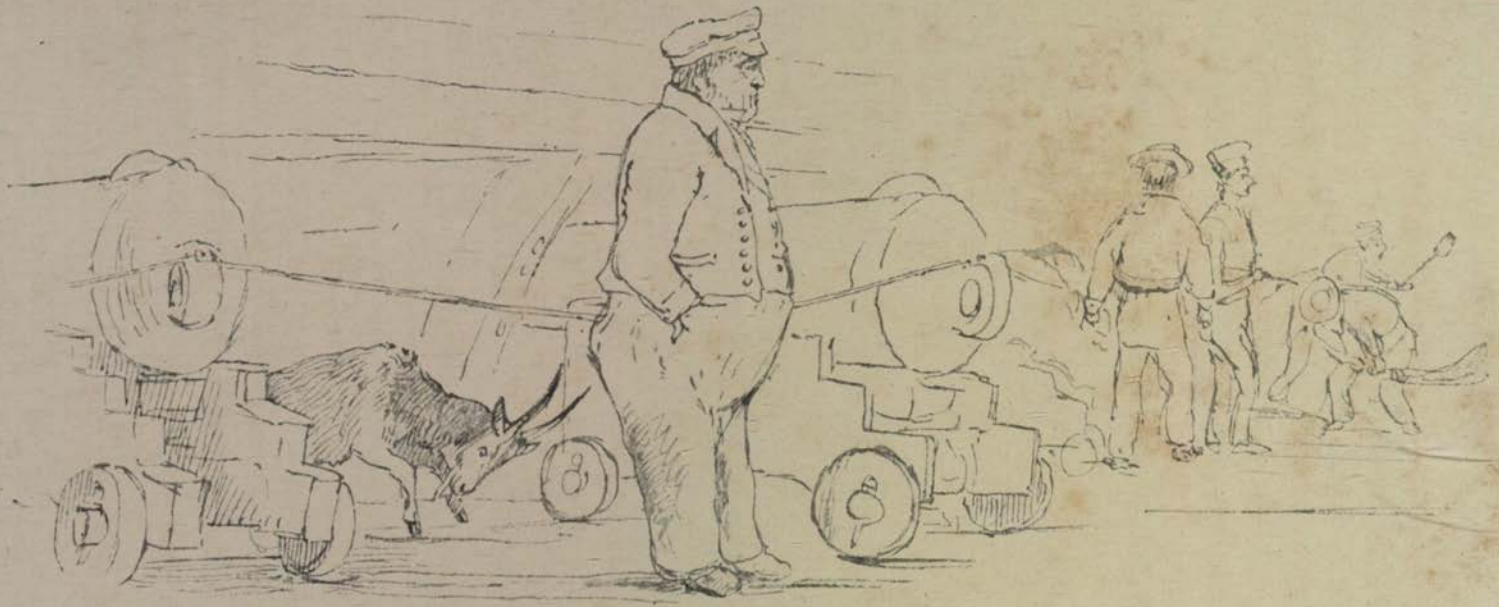
The one other exercise, specially devised by the captain, was known as "toggle and mount," and this always evoked much mirth, though the purpose was serious. After this manner did we toggle: All hands were massed on one side of the quarter-deck, variously armed, in the motley manner of the period, with boarding pikes, tomahawks, cutlasses, pistols, and muskets, a party carrying scaling-ladders. The poop repre-

sented the enemy's fortress, to be captured by bold assault over the poop-rail.

When all was ready, we were marched round the forecastle, and on reaching the opposite gangway the order was given, "Toggle and mount!" That was the supreme moment, and with a frantic rush and suppressed laughter the ladders were toggled and upreared, and over the poop-rail we surged in impetuous attack, to be brought up by the taffrail as we cut and thrust wildly in the air. It was all exceedingly absurd and delightful.

The rest of our instruction went on in classes. Rifle-drill consisted in loading the unwieldy weapon with a 2-ounce ball wrapped in a greasy rag and hammered into the muzzle. The kick of these rifles always left their mark on the shoulder.

Field-piece drill was highly popular, our instructor being the first lieutenant, Thomas Hodgkinson, who had the reputation of being the smartest drill in the service. At Rat Island, now part of the Gosport victualling establishment, we made fascine gabions and field-defences with all the relish of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, afterwards blowing them up with equal satisfaction. On one of these occasions the captain and commander came to superintend operations. "Stately stept they east the wall, and stately stept they west," and as they did so a most alarming incident took place. The explosion came off far too soon, and a flying balk of timber, which might have broken anyone else's leg and welcome, struck the commander's. I think we all expected nothing better than hanging, but as the accident eventually led to his promotion, the hurt was well salved. At all events, we heard no more of it.



F. Gifford.

THE GUNNER'S REVERIE DISTURBED.

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A considerable portion of our time was spent at the laboratory, where at the Firebarns we were taught to make rockets, blue lights, port fires, to fill the newly invented quill percussion tubes, and make up ball and blank cartridge. I cannot remember that any of this knowledge, excepting the making of blank cartridge, was ever of use to any living human being, though naturally it recommended itself well enough to wholesome lads scarcely past the age of schoolboys.

Portsmouth was then a walled town, very naval and picturesque, enclosed within its high ramparts and guarded gates. But inside were the vile slums, where poor Jack had been destroyed and devoured body and soul for so many generations of hard sea-life and riotous return. Southsea was a large village, and a long stretch of fields lay between Landport and Cosham. As for the recreations, cricket, football, rifle or gun competition had no existence, and animal spirits found a vent in association with the prize-fighters who frequented Cosham when in training. They were considered real heroes. I remember the ambition of one of our sporting messmates was to be seen in a drag with Alleck, a noted bruiser, driving, and with one of Jem Burn's bull-pups by his side. The point was that one should say to another: "Who's that swell with Alleck, and whose bull-pup has he got?" when the other would presumably give the straight tip.

Well, well, fashions change, and I have known more harmful ambitions. It will be remembered that Dickens—a Portsmouth man—has immortalised this state of feeling in the moral tyranny of the great "Game Chicken" over Mr. Toots.

Queer bets were also the fashion. A windmill stood

on the hill at Cosham, and for a bet of ten shillings—neither more nor less—one of us spread-eagled himself on the arms of the windmill, and was whirled round in imminent but delightful peril for some minutes. And for another and heavier bet I can recall Leveson Somerset (afterwards an admiral) wheeling a messmate in a barrow from Cosham to the "Nut" (the famous Keppel's Head) on the Hard—five perspiring miles. In fact, if a practical joke could in any way be got up, it was always worth doing.

The owner of that fine old residence Cam's Hall had complained that the shot from the *Excellent's* target practice, which was always in the direction of Fareham Creek, had come unpleasantly near his property. It was an opportunity we could not lose, and one dark night three of the mates, taking a boat and a 32-pounder shot with them, pulled up to Cam's Hall, dug a scattered-looking furrow under the drawing-room window, laid the shot in it, and departed.

The horror of the household next day may be imagined; never was fear better justified, so they declared. The Commander-in-Chief was appealed to, and Captain Chads was ordered to investigate this very extraordinary occurrence. It took much to convince Cam's Hall that no right-minded gun from the *Excellent* had done so nefarious a deed. Inquiries were then made as to the exits from the ship on the previous night, and the culprits, making honourable confession, escaped with a good dressing down.

The day for these particular fooleries is past and gone, and as every period must needs specialise in its own aberrations, I am inclined to admit that the "flannelled fools and the muddied oafs" are, on the whole, the more sensible of the two species.

At the close of our year's training we were examined by the Gunnery Staff of the *Excellent*, this including a *viva voce* by the captain. Mathematical examination there was none, but I presume our instructor made some sort of a report upon which our merits in this most important branch of our training were classified. None failed, but a few were awarded a 3·3, which meant a little more than a knowledge of the three R's. Some of these became distinguished officers. The average man won a 1·6, and I was well satisfied with a 1·3—the highest certificate, as I have said (a 1·1), being awarded only to those who attained proficiency in pure mathematics.

CHAPTER IX

H.M.S. "AMPHITRITE"

"He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea
Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight.
* * * * *
And O the little war-like world within!"

BYRON.

THE examinations over, I was appointed gunnery mate of the *Amphitrite*, a beautiful little frigate of 25 guns.

Our captain, Charles Frederick, had worked his upward way very slowly in the service, and was now fifty-four. He was an old war officer who had been desperately wounded, a thorough seaman, genial and kind-hearted, and the *Amphitrite*, therefore, was fortunate in her captain. He was afterwards a Lord of the Admiralty, but died before his tardily recognised merits were otherwise rewarded. A boat from the *Excellent* transferred me and my belongings to the hulk alongside of which the *Amphitrite* was lashed. With me came twelve seamen gunners, and the captain's eye twinkled with delight as he took stock of those fine fellows. The crew soon filled up, for the ship and the Pacific station, to which we were bound, were both popular.

In the midshipmen's mess I was the senior member

and caterer, this latter thankless office making me responsible for the supply of provender for my hungry messmates, and our only storeroom was a huge locker in the berth, the cover of which formed the mess-table. Here were stored such luxuries as hams, tongues, cheese, and groceries of all kinds.

This compound of strong flavours, all boxed up under our noses, and without any pretence of ventilation, produced a horrifying atmosphere; and when the tropics were reached, and the great army of maggots appeared (I really apologise for these details) —long and white in the hams, short and indolent in the cheese, hopping and active in the sugar, stagnant and sticky in the jam—and firmly established their right to share our luxuries, matters became serious. Every morning the table had to be lifted to get at the food, most appropriately named "grub," and when the united smells ascended a rush was made for the steerage.

Covered up once more, the caterer's bad time came. He had to bear the blame of every maggot, and the cry "Let us cob the caterer!" no doubt would have been carried into practice if he had not very unmistakably exercised his official authority and subdued the growlers. I am anticipating, however, and I return to the day when the *Amphitrite*—a living and lovely thing —slipped from her buoy and stood out of Portsmouth, under topsails and top-gallant sails, and anchored at Spithead, when, after inspection by the Commander-in-Chief, we hoisted the ship's bumboat and its portly mistress on board and made sail for Plymouth.

The bumboat woman has accompanied many other oddities of old naval life into limbo, but some of us, "shorter in wind as in memory long," will recall with a sort of regret the affectionate interest the name

once inspired for the old lady, who probably four years later would be the first to beat out to Spithead against a strong south-wester to furnish us with the unspeakable luxuries of soft tack and butter and a fresh leg of mutton. Is it any wonder that affection was the outcome of such relations?

On February 15, 1850, we left Plymouth for the Pacific. I was gunnery officer, it is true, but (equally in the *Amphitrite* as in all other ships in which for five years I held that post) I was a watch-keeping officer in common with the other senior executives, and this without the sweets of the extra pay so justly given to the men of the present day. But we took it as a matter of course, and a senior midshipman was put into my watch, so that in moderate weather during the day he took charge of the deck, whilst I carried on the drills.

Charles Parry, son of the great Arctic navigator, was my watch-mate. He bid fair to rival his father in all good and noble accomplishment, but an early death shattered his professional promise.

So we sailed south on a prosperous breeze, beguiling our spare time with bouts of singlestick and boxing. No pads or masks had we, and we were decorated with black and blue weals innumerable; but never a temper was lost, however hard the punishment. Then, in view of the dark-eyed señoritas of the Spanish Main, a class for the acquisition of that loveliest of languages was formed by our naval instructor, and we went at it with a will.

A gale swept us past Madeira and Teneriffe, and Neptune came on board for the baptism of his babes and sucklings as we rolled in the doldrums on the Equator. And then the South-East Trade picked us up



F. Gifford.

MIDSHIPMEN'S RIDE TO CINTRA: AN INCIDENT BY THE WAY.

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and carried us safely into the noble port of Rio—surely the very gateway of a tropical paradise. There is nowhere so bold a coast, such a picturesque huddling of mountains, such a maze of islands, nor such a wonderful blossoming of vegetation, as in this glorious harbour.

Yet here it was that I and several of my messmates came very near losing the number of our mess. The Paqueta Islets, floating like blue cloudlets in the harbour some ten miles from the ship, attracted us, and eight of us started, with myself in charge, in one of our boats to visit them. With a fresh breeze favouring, we were soon dodging about amongst these cocoa-nut-treed, coffee-planted islets; then, choosing the loveliest silver-sanded beach, we landed joyously and explored the island. The time came for return, and as we drew clear of the land a sudden change of weather met us, and before long we were involved in a tornado. The heavens were riven with lightning, the thunder was so close that it literally shook us, and deluges of fierce rain and blasts of wind buried the boat in the water. The youngsters worked splendidly at baling, and obeyed every order instantly; but we were in great danger, and just then a flash fortunately showed an island under our lea.

We managed to pay her head off, and were driven on a shallow beach. Here we found two negroes in a hut, and they hospitably gave us food and dried our water-logged clothing in a huge frying-pan used for roasting coffee. The tornado swept past, and a gentle breeze seemed to assure us that we might venture on, so we left our haven and steered for the Rio lights, visible low down on the horizon. And once more the weather changed with the caprice of the tropics; the

rain fell in pitiless torrents, and we were numbed to the bone amidst the utter darkness that surrounded us. The youngsters collapsed this time (and no wonder), and lay helpless on the stern-sheets; but the two oldsters attended the sail whilst I steered, feeling that the sinking or swimming of the boat had become a matter of complete indifference. At last, without twilight or gradation, the day broke, and before us lay a large island. Even then we scarcely cared, so great was our collapse, but somehow or other we made a lovely little bay, and touched land under the very walls of the proprietor's house. He realised our exhaustion better than we ourselves were capable of doing, and, like a noble old fellow, roused his slaves out and took charge of our helpless party. They warmed and fed us, and when we were somewhat restored he rigged us up in his own clothes, whilst I, who was last served, came in for his wife's petticoats. Our clothes dried and our bodies refreshed, we took a short nap, covered by softly woven mats, and then "Buenos Dios." Not a thing would the dear old boy accept but a little book sodden and crumpled which I had in my pocket. We found the ship's boats had been searching for us everywhere, and I came in for the foreseen wigging from the captain for going so far from the ship.

A week later we weighed with a light breeze; it failed, and the order was, "Out boats and tow." The modern seaman cannot understand the treadmill labour for three hours under a burning sun of jerking the boats forward by the oars and instantly being jerked back again by the ship. I know nothing of old sea-life more intensely disagreeable. At last the breeze came, the boats were hoisted in, and we had left Rio; but it had not left us. The next day the report spread that a

man was down with yellow fever; it was too true, and others quickly followed. Nothing sends such a shudder through a ship as the entrance of this fell disease, when men look at each other askance to see if the doom is written in their companion's face. In some extreme cases whole ships' companies have been demoralised, as in an instance on the coast of Africa, when half the crew had succumbed, and men could not be found to attend on those stricken. In that extremity the heroic doctor of the ship, to inspire belief that the disease was not infectious, took a glassful of black vomit from the mouth of a dying man and before all his shipmates drank it off, walking the deck for an hour to show he took no antidote! We, however, were more fortunate, and with a strong beam wind we flew south into cold weather, only losing one of our number.

Two days we spent at the Falkland Islands, shooting over its morasses and stone-strewn valleys, obtaining a goodly supply of wild geese and equally wild cattle. The islands in those days were not developed, although Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir Bartholomew Sulivan was making an experiment with a cattle-farm. Its population consisted mainly of some 200 runaway merchant seamen, who earned good money during the sealing season and spent it in wild orgies later on.

Rounding the Horn under all sail some days later, we fell in with *H.M.S. Mœander*, downward bound, commanded by Harry Keppel. Our captain proceeded on board the *Mœander*, and on his return I was sent for and given part of a hindquarter of beef sent with Captain Keppel's compliments to the "*Amphitrite's* midshipmen's mess." Such an act of attention from a post-captain to midshipmen is, I believe, un-

precedented. No wonder he was loved by all the service.

On arrival at Valparaiso I found myself appointed acting lieutenant of a ship in the harbour. To bid adieu to the restrictions of a midshipman's mess, to enter into possession of my own cabin, to sit up as late as I liked, to feel at last that my back hair was up and my petticoats lengthened, was a most gratifying sensation; but it was hard to part from a band of young fellows who had helped and supported me all through. Before leaving England we had decided that, unlike most messes, there should be no fines for bad language or other irregularities, but that we would trust to the good feeling of our messmates. We never had reason to regret this; the most thoughtless responded to the appeal, and the lads went further, and said their prayers and read their Bibles in the morning, when this was unusual and involved not a little horseplay and ridicule.

My new captain was one well known for his eccentricities and uncertain disposition, but he had a sense of humour that redeemed many of his failings. Some of his oddities were harmless enough; others involved more serious consequences, as in the case of a high-spirited and valuable officer, who, for a slight error of judgment, was placed under close arrest, and so confined for many weeks in the tropics with a sentry at his cabin door, until the poor fellow completely broke down. On making the apology the captain required, he was released, but only to resign his commission, and a promising career was thus ruined. This kind of thing is no longer possible, but will recall the despotic power of captains on distant stations within the memory of living men. On another

occasion we in the ward-room were in the full tide of hilarity at our Christmas dinner, when the first lieutenant was summoned by the captain on deck, and directed to see that order was preserved on the lower deck. I was then ordered to see the guns properly secured, and so on in turn, until the ward-room was empty, and our hilarity changed into a good deal of indignation. But he was equally indifferent if the laugh went against himself. One day at sea we fell in with an American ship. In reply to our hail "Where from?" she answered "Valparaiso," where our commander's wife was living at the time. Then came his question, which convulsed us with laughter. "Is Mrs. A—— confined yet?" (Mrs. A—— having been many years a childless wife). "Who the —— is Mrs. A——?" was the Yankee's reply. We did not answer, and no one enjoyed the joke more than our captain, for he had effected his object in letting us know what his expectations were! Needless to say, they were never realised. The fact was, he was a little mad, yet none the less an able officer in many ways.

During one of the many revolutions in Chili, an English steamer belonging to a copper-mining company at Coquimbo had been seized by the revolutionists. We were sent to make inquiries and recapture her if possible, and for this purpose I was detached to cruise off the coast in a ten-oared cutter with orders to intercept and capture her at all risks. The midshipmen and boat's crew were jubilant enough at the thought of a prize, but it seemed to me that success could only be secured if darkness permitted us to make a surprise attack.

It was reported that she would call at the little

harbour of Tongoy, some fifteen miles south of Coquimbo; so, heading for that place, I hid the boat behind some rocks, and placing sentinels on the high cliffs, waited for three days, but in vain. However, we had some excellent shooting, and then learnt from Coquimbo that the steamer had been recaptured south of Valparaiso.

Shortly after this my promotion from England arrived, and I had the good fortune to be appointed gunnery lieutenant of the *Thetis*, a beautiful frigate of 38 guns, at Valparaiso, and commanded by Captain Augustus Kuper, C.B.

CHAPTER X

H.M.S. "THETIS"

"Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odour of ocean about him."
LONGFELLOW.

A BILLET as gunnery lieutenant and watch-keeper of a smart frigate whose captain expected zeal in both departments was no sinecure. It meant drill all day and watch every night; but at twenty-one no work should be too hard, and I asked for nothing better.

Our inspection by the Commander-in-Chief was satisfactory, but an animadversion by the admiral on the slackness of the midshipmen at their drills aroused all my determination to mend matters, and, though the youngsters kicked, I was persistent with them—partly, no doubt, out of enjoyment of my new-fledged authority, but honestly for the good of their souls. On a system of passing the smart ones out of the drills and keeping the dull ones grinding, we eventually got straight, and at the end of the commission I had no reason to be ashamed of the places they took when passing for lieutenants on board the *Excellent*. One of them has often turned this period of task-mastership into a happy reminiscence by declaring that the gunnery and company drill he learnt on board the *Thetis* led to his being sent up-country with the *Shannon's* Naval Brigade in the Indian Mutiny, and thus gave him the first step

on the ladder which led to the distinguished position of Admiral of the Fleet, G.C.B., and V.C. It may, then, be imagined with what interest I have watched the career of Nowell Salmon, the little midshipman of 1851.

The end of the year gave us a delightful cruise along the southern coast of Chili.

At Concepçion, standing on the wooded hills, no lovelier scene could be imagined than the distant Andes, looking down in frozen silence on rolling river and fair country, still in the ruinous stagnation of three centuries of Spanish rule. But a small beginning had been made even then of what now is a high development of mineral and agricultural expansion.

Here we spent Christmas in usual man-of-war fashion, afterwards giving general leave. The Chilian authorities assented, and, in remembrance of their and our great sailor, Lord Cochrane, patiently endured all Jack's absurdities ashore—the first of which consisted in marching *en masse* to the English Consul's house at Talcahuano, and, with three rousing cheers, informing him that they were come ashore for a Christmas spree, and begged they might not be molested, for if they were, they would be under the necessity of taking the town.

Fortunately, this considerate warning was heeded, and after they had carried a few belated officers in procession round the streets, and variously exhausted their animal spirits, other and more potent spirits overcame them nearly all. Well indeed for the new Navy and for the country that this is changed.

Valdivia and Chiloé disclosed the same lovely country, singing with rivers, glorious with lakes and woods. At Chiloé we made acquaintance with the Araucanians—the poor remnant spared by the exterminating Spaniard



F. Gifford.

CHRISTMAS DAY ON THE LOWER DECK.

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of the original inhabitants. Tall, strong, black-haired men, they kept themselves distinct from their conquerors in a kind of melancholy dignity, concerned only with their flocks and herds, and living under the rule of their caçiques. The life was peaceable and friendly. One can see no reason why it should not persist, yet, in accordance with a mysterious and almost universal law, the presence of the white man (their inferior physically, and, I think, morally) was killing them out.

Oh, the shooting, the seine-hauling, the picnics of those enchanting coasts in the "milkwarm summer weather" in a climate like the English, but raised to the ninth power of perfection! There was plenty of rain, but a rapturous air that brought forth all the sweet forest scents and opened into blossom the wild strawberry, the convolvulus, and other dwellers of the English woods, strangely familiar in this new world.

On one of the picnics, after a glorious supper of fish, grog, songs, and bonfire, we started at a late hour to return, and found we had mislaid the boatswain—our privileged, gruff, unique old shipmate! Search was made for him in Fairyland, but he could not be found; so we left him, like Bottom, the weaver, in the very court of Titania. Next day he was seen gesticulating on the beach, and being brought off, and produced before the captain, he tendered the following explanation:

"Well, yer honour, I goes into the bush a bit, and when I's got there them blessed creepers got round my legs and capsized me, and when I'd fetched clear there weren't no boat, so I made it out under a tree comfortable like, and I hope no offence."

A reprimand met the case, and did not subdue the

twinkle in his little grey eye. He confided to the midshipmen that he was blessed if he would mind another night in the bush. The midshipmen were, indeed, his natural allies, and he was their guide, philosopher, and friend—a perfect vade mecum of seamanship, the Nestor of their mess, laying down the law on all social and naval matters with a gravity never shattered by the laughter it evoked from the lads. With the other officers he maintained an awful ceremony; like Marryat's Mr. Chucks, he would never go abaft the main-mast save once in the year (at Christmas-time), when, dining in state with the captain and officers, the oracle would break silence and emit the most staggering opinions as to the whole economy of the lower-deck, and the necessary action of the quarter-deck in relation to its problems.

Years passed on, and Nowell Salmon had hoisted his flag at Plymouth as Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Station. Mr. Tonge, the boatswain, then long retired, went on board to visit his old shipmate, by whom, needless to say, he was generously entertained. Then they both came on deck, where Admiral Salmon, attended by his flag-captain and staff, bade him good-bye. But Mr. Tonge could not forget the little midshipman, his protégé, in the Commander-in-Chief, and putting his hand on the admiral's shoulder, he said, with all the well-remembered severity: "Look you here, my boy: you mind what I've been a-telling on ye, and ye'll do *well* in this here ship;" and thus saying, with a roll of his swivel eye, he departed.

The staff concealed its smiles, but the admiral, remembering old times, accepted the admonition with due humility.

Returning to Valparaiso, it was a joyful surprise to

find my friend Gordon as gunnery mate of the *Virago*. It was but a glimpse, and he sailed for the Islands, and we for the arid ports of North Chili. We saw Cobija, the only seaport of Bolivia, with its one well of brackish water, and not a blade of vegetation within 150 miles, all vegetables and fruits being brought from Valparaiso, 700 miles away—a place where no rain has fallen within the memory of man, guarded by its scorched hills and desolate as the Mountains of the Moon.

Sailing northward for 130 miles, the Chincha Islands rose ahead. Thirty years have passed since the last cargo of guano was shipped from these rocks to Europe, and they have wellnigh faded from remembrance. I, who scanned them through my glass, little thought that in after-years they would be associated with the blackest tale of human wickedness it has ever been my lot to unravel.

It is interesting to look back on the distant ages, when, during some upheaval on this still agitated coast, these three islets were flung up to a height of 100 feet above the sea. The largest of them not quite a mile in length, or three-quarters in breadth, and puckered with holes and caves, they formed an ideal resting-place for myriads of sea-birds, feeding on the greater myriads of fish swarming below. As the ages passed, the droppings from these birds covered the rocks, filling every cave, and compelling them to burrow their nests in the guano they had made. No rain ever fell to wash it away, and the guano rose higher and higher, until in 1842 it had reached a depth of 100 feet. Then Peru, prompted by the science of Europe, opened her eyes to the riches that lay at her doors. The impoverished lands of the Western nations were cry-

ing for phosphates to renew their plenty, and here they were in abundance. A great trade was thus established.

As we drew near it was strange to see large ships lying alongside the perpendicular cliffs, lashed to the shore where no vestige of harbour or shelter existed, as comfortably as if loading in the London Docks, the only difference being an anchor to seaward to haul off by.

Anchoring off the largest islet in 33 fathoms, we landed by means of an accommodation ladder, fastened to the rock as to a ship's side; and as we stepped on it we looked downwards to the translucent ocean depths, and upwards to a mountain of guano, from which proceeded volatile ammonia so powerful that it choked and blinded us for a time. The irritation gradually wore off, and we were able to look round at the busy scene. Some six or eight ships were loading with guano from great shoots on the cliff-tops let into their holds. These were fed by at least a thousand labourers. It was they who claimed our attention, for we had heard of the cruelties they endured from their Peruvian task-masters. The greater number were Chinese coolies, and mingled with them were villainous-looking convicts and not a few olive-skinned Polynesians, all toiling on, harried and exhausted in the great heat of the dust-laden atmosphere. No suspicion then crossed our minds of the atrocities by which these unhappy islanders had been obtained. We were to learn the history in later years.

Climbing to the top of the guano, we stood 200 feet above the sea. To the south were the two smaller islets, as busy as our own. The ocean glittering at our feet gave no hint of its power to overwhelm, as

it was soon to do, the coast cities whose feet it now lapped so peacefully. But round the snowy peaks of the Cordilleras was hung here and there a fleecy vapour—unheeded warning that the central fires were only slumbering, and would awake one day to deadly activity.

We were not alone on our coign of vantage; the air was fluttering with flocks of sea-birds, entirely fearless, for they were immune. No man may disturb them, and when they whirled seaward the waters were perforated as if by shot, as, with closed wings, volley after volley of birds dropped into the depths in search of prey. On the far side of the island the poor Chinese coolies, with their love of home and ancestor-worship strong upon them, had carved out of the solid guano a good-sized joss-house—the altar of guano also, and lit with a tiny oil-lamp. Here one or two melancholy-looking Celestials were bowing and worshipping in their mysterious faith:

> "Where joss-sticks turn to scented smoke
> The little sins of little folk,"

and the strangeness of it left us wondering what part of the universal spirit can be our common heritage.

Perhaps the most singular feature of these rocks is the graveyard of the seals. At one point the broken cliffs form a rough passage to and from the sea, and here the seals and great sea-lions come, not to breed, but to die. The feeble and the maimed are helped over the rocky road by their stronger companions, and then they are left to the loneliness of death. One wonders with what feelings these creatures, so human in their intelligence and affections, look out for the last time upon their illimitable ocean home.

As the night fell we left the Chincha Islands, unaware

that we had seen in these Polynesian labourers the beginning of a system scarcely to be paralleled for cold-blooded cruelty. Twenty wicked years had to elapse before the light shone upon these dark places, and it might still have remained a secret had not the question of Polynesian labour been raised in North Queensland.

Next day we were at anchor in Callao, with apparently no prospect of escape from the desolate shores of Peru. But a sailor's life is happily full of surprises, and one day when the captain came on board the joyful tidings spread that we were ordered to Vancouver.



A MIDSHIPMAN'S BET WON, BUT HIS SEAT LOST.

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CHAPTER XI

VANCOUVER

"The Indian's heart is dark and cold;
It closes darkly o'er its care,
And, formed in Nature's sternest mould,
Is slow to feel and strong to bear."

WHITTIER.

HAPPILY the experience of the *America's* cruise in these seas was not repeated on our way to Vancouver; yet long weeks must needs pass in the monotony of no society but our own. One great advantage we possessed—an ideal frigate captain, experienced and capable. His object was to command a happy ship, and indeed he fully succeeded, for we soon learnt that his temper, though fiery, left no sting behind it. He had one or two tricks of habit barometrical in their certainty. When his thumbs sought his waistcoat pockets, we looked out for squally weather; when they reached the waistcoat arm-holes, the storm would burst.

"I am not to be contradicted, sir; I am captain of this ship. What! you contradict me again? Go below, sir, under arrest." But by next day the sky would be clear, and no harm done. He afterwards won the G.C.B. most deservedly for the action at Simonosaki, and was Commander-in-Chief on the China Station, where I obtained post rank.

Our first lieutenant's weight had literally swamped

him in the service, for the poor fellow scaled nearly twenty stone. His sword-belt would buckle round three ordinary men, and though he carried on his duties with the utmost zeal, he was afflicted with the most untimely "expositions of sleep," and would drowse off on all sorts of incongruous occasions. I remember his slumbering on the stern gratings, and the midshipmen (who loved him not) careering round him in an impish dance expressive of every sort of derision. However, he awoke suddenly, and a long spell of stopped leave and watch and watch for the culprits followed. Many a time afterwards his sleep was feigned, and other unwary midshipmen fell into the trap repeatedly laid, until the little game became too dangerous.

His fate and that of his successor were sad. Towards the end of the commission the torrid heat of the Gulf of California carried him off, and the second lieutenant, a first-rate fellow, J. J. S. Josling, reigned in his stead. Ten years later he (then flag-captain to Admiral Kuper) was killed by the same shot as the commander in the fight at Kagosima, and fell at the admiral's feet.

On May 24 I was officer of the watch, and when I came on deck, sea and sky no longer met each other in an empty monotony. We were in the Straits of Juan de Fuca, there about nine miles wide.

To the southward the snowy peaks of the Olympian Mountains flushed "one pure illimitable rose" under the sunrise, whilst the morning mists billowed in fleecy clouds at their base. Close at hand lay Vancouver's Island, its coast-line broken into bays and inlets—a very paradise for yachtsmen. Beyond these were mountain glades dotted with ash and cedar, a home for future colonists, but then only the abode of the

Indian and the bear. Around were many islets faintly blue, and in the far distance—Alp calling to Alp—was the sister range of the Olympian—the Cascade Mountains of British Columbia.

Alongside was a fairy fleet of canoes, sharp in the bows, swelling exquisitely to their greatest beam, and tapering aft in lines of perfect grace. There was nothing fairy-like, however, about their crews. They presented flat faces smeared with ochre, barred with white, black hair falling on their shoulders, and, hovering about them like a palpable atmosphere, the abiding smell of the fish-oil with which their bodies were smeared. Yet there was grace, too, in the strength of their paddling as they easily kept abreast of our six knots, tossing up a salmon or bear-skin with one sinewy arm, and keeping the paddle at work with the other. They were the well-named Fish Indians, a race distinct from those of the plains.

We were bound for Esquimalt, which already had commended itself as the best harbour near Fort Victoria, the recently established trading-station of the Hudson Bay Company. The difficulty was to find it, for, incredible as it may now seem, we had only a written description by a former visitor. Moreover, we wished to know if H.M.S. *Amphitrite* was there. Our redoubtable boatswain, who had sailed these seas before, had declared he could speak Chinook, the Indian language. He was sent for, and unblushingly told the captain that this was the case; and a demonstration being immediately commanded, he stood in the hammock-nettings, and uttered a series of deep guttural sounds, interspersed with sundry clucks, whilst all lent attentive ears. The bewildered Indians returned clucks and gutturals of an amazing fluency, and Mr.

Tonge, gravely turning to the captain, tendered the information that "They say there ain't no ship howsomever down at Esquimalt." The stately skipper received it seriously. The midshipmen of the watch, who knew better, screamed with laughter; but Mr. Tonge's reputation as a professor of Chinook was firmly established, for, as a matter of fact, the *Amphitrite* had not then arrived. This recalls another reminiscence contributed by Sir Nowell Salmon. A Christmas dance was given on board, and on this occasion also Mr. Tonge distinguished himself from the linguistic point of view. On being asked by the first lieutenant how he intended arranging his decorative effects with the flags, he replied laconically: "Nickelsee fash—festewn-like."

The bystanders pondered, but could make nothing of this, and a strong impression gained ground that it was another outburst of Chinook. Finally the first lieutenant's ingenuity pitched upon the French language and unravelled the sentence as "Negligé fashion —festoon-like," and this it proved to be. Nowell Salmon and other old *Thetises* adopted the phrase and made it their own, and it certainly is attractive in its way.

Rounding a wooded point, the beautiful harbour of Esquimalt came in sight, and the plunge of our anchor sent the echoes flying through the surrounding forests —no sound else, not a creature stirring, as we looked at the lonely place that was to be our home for months.

Yet for young minds a gleam of romance flickered through the long aisles of the woods, and envious eyes watched when the captain asked me to accompany him on the first shore expedition, and I stepped into the boat before him elate and ready.

Trees, trees everywhere, many of them 200 feet high, laced with undergrowth, hoary with lichen. That was my first impression—that and the majestic silence and loneliness of the place. Suddenly, with a crash like the rocketing of a hundred cock-pheasants, a mighty stag rose almost at our feet (where now stand the workshops of a first-class naval dockyard), and ere our startled brains and guns could adjust themselves, he was off and away through the forest. No dreaming after that! Here was reality, and every crack of a dry twig, every whisper of a leaf, gave a thrill of excitement.

"What did you do? What did you get?" were the questions of the crowded ward-room on our return, and my report of stags, grouse, and the rest of it, sent everyone to overhauling guns and rods for the rest of the day. Meanwhile, Captain Kuper and the officers prepared for the visit of ceremony to the Governor at Fort Victoria.

Strict service this time, no question of sport, but an interesting occasion for all that; for James Douglas was no ordinary man, and his history an unusual one even for that wild time and place.

A row of three miles brought us to the fort. Is it possible for any of those who know the stately capital of British Columbia to close their eyes and see, as I do, the little wood palisaded building which then represented it? There it stood, defended by bastions at opposite angles, and mounting the four 9-pounder guns which were its protection against the surrounding tribes of the red man.

The contrast recalls a striking verse of Kipling's:

"And he shall desire loneliness, and his desire shall bring
Hard on his heels a thousand wheels, a people and a king.

And he shall come back o'er his own track, and by his scarce cool camp ;
There he shall meet the roaring street, the derrick, and the stamp ;
For he must blaze a nation's ways with hatchet and with brand,
Till on his last-won wilderness an empire's bulwarks stand."

Such was the small beginning of a day that will be mightier yet as the daughter-nations realise their functions in the Pax Britannica.

The Governor greeted us in stately fashion. We were not then cognizant of his transcendent services in securing for England the sea-coast of British Columbia, claimed by the United States in virtue of the Monroe doctrine; but it was easy to see that here indeed was a *man*, middle-aged, tall, and well-knit, with keen features, alert and kindly. I recognised the type that has broken out of our island-home in all centuries to colonise and civilise—the born pioneer. His influence over the surrounding tribes was unbounded, and the more so because of his perfect acquaintance with their dialects, and the fact that his wife was herself an Indian princess, and his saviour from death at the hands of her people. Here lay his romance. By stratagem her tribe had seized Fort James in the Rockies, and Douglas (then in command), the centre of a horde of maddened Indians, was at his last struggle, when, like Pocahontas herself, an Indian girl, the daughter of a chief, tore her way to his side, held back the savages, and pleaded his cause with such passion that the red man granted his life to her entreaties. She lived to share his honours, and to become Lady Douglas, wife of the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of British Columbia.

It did not take us long to realise that in bad weather communication with the fort was risky by water, for an officer and two men lost their lives in a rough sea

and the floating kelp which entangles swimmers along the shore. It was, therefore, resolved to break a road through the forest, and the novel task was tackled with enthusiasm. Axes sent their echoes ringing down the glades; mighty trees fell. We macadamised the track after a fashion, and from henceforth by this road (now traversed by electric cars) we had easy access to Victoria.

Our next work lay at Fort Rupert, where the garrison consisted of about sixty fur-traders, on excellent terms with the surrounding Newetty Indians. No danger was dreaded, for the braves held the character of the "King George men" (as they call the Englishmen) in high estimation, and sharp contrast with their detestation of the "Boston men," or Americans.

Therefore these fierce savages, still nominal lords of the soil, brought to the fort their bear-skins and other peltry in exchange for tobacco and blankets, and good-fellowship was the order of the day. We mixed freely with the tribe, marvelling greatly at their lodges, each about 90 feet in length, 30 feet in breadth, and 10 feet high, their sides formed of massive wooden pillars, deeply notched on top to receive the immense tree-trunks, which (lifted by some means unknown to us) were thatched and roofed in with plates of rough bark.

Such might have been the temple of some woodland deity—Pan, faun, or satyr; and none the less so for the grotesque carving and painting of these pillars, with their legends and tokens in boldest relief, and the frank obscenity of many of the emblems.

Yet there was art here, too; it was extraordinary to note the skill of those Indians in carving whales' teeth with designs of rough but unmistakable charm.

But where is beauty absent?

> "Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
> Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
> But it carves the bow of beauty there,
> And the ripples in rhyme the oar forsake."

In these lodges the men went about naked as the woodland deities themselves, and the women scarcely less so. The children played on the ground with toy canoes and misshapen wooden dolls—one of which was in after-years a precious treasure to a child of my own, who cherished her "papoose" with all the tenderness of her little Indian sisters.

The people had a remarkable appreciation of music, and our band was a mingled amazement and delight to them. No matter how keen the bargaining, how entrancing the novelty of the moment, when the melody began they stiffened into spellbound silence and a very absorption of listening. It was *chlose*, very good, they would say at the close in their sententious way.

Bear, deer, and puma abounded, the latter much dreaded, and with reason. During our stay, whilst the women were gathering roots in the forest, one puma killed twelve girls, tearing them down one after another like a dog worrying sheep. We would gladly have avenged them, and the Indians were willing guides, but we had no luck in the impenetrable woods.

On June 7 we left Fort Rupert for Queen Charlotte's Islands, 130 miles distant. A gale and fog met us in the narrow Newetty Canal. It was critical work. For twenty-four hours all hands were on deck; we tacked every hour, once missed stays and wore, just clearing the rock. Exhausting work, but Mr. Tonge on the forecastle kept things lively, unburdening his soul to the men who were getting a bit slack. "You beggars,

you! you're like Potiphar's army: I say unto one man Come, and he won't come, and to another Go, and he'll see me d——d first." His objurgations had effect, for we did the trick, crossed the bar safely with only a few feet of water under our keel, and three days later sighted Queen Charlotte's Islands.

For a considerable time the Hudson Bay Company had frequented these islands, seeking bear, sea-otter, and other peltry. Quite recently gold had been found. A Yankee schooner was reported there, and hence our visit, the first made by a man-of-war.

By the aid of the Hudson Bay Company's pilot we found the fiord we were seeking, and entered the narrow channel, with pine and cedar clad mountains rising 1,000 feet above our mastheads on either side, whilst underneath the lead found no bottom at 70 fathoms. Four miles farther up the fiord slanted sharply to the east; the wind followed; and three miles farther the fiord ended, where a rushing torrent plunged from a mountain gorge. Here we found bottom with 36 fathoms, and secured the ship with hawsers to the trees on either side.

It was a wild scene in itself, and its strangeness was increased by a flotilla of large Indian canoes—graceful in the extreme, and manned by the finest-looking natives we had yet seen. They were perfectly naked, well built and muscular, with skins that under the paint and fish-oil were almost white. Some of the girls were really pretty. They spoke little, even to each other, and expressed no astonishment at the unwonted sights before them, but were eager to barter their furs and gold specimens for any rubbish we could spare. They belonged to the Skittaget tribe, now recognised as the finest and most advanced in the

arts of any on the north-west coast. As at Vancouver, our band alone won their unstinted admiration, and they eagerly absorbed every note. The carved totem posts in front of their massive lodges were much more boldly and originally treated than any we had seen. It is sad to think that these fine people, degraded by contact with so-called civilisation, have almost disappeared. Indeed, the beginnings could be seen on our own quarter-deck as they exchanged their furs for "fire-water" and drank it greedily.

Our business was to report on the gold prospects, and there it was, running in quartz veins through the granite rocks overhanging the deep inlet.

The Americans had left, but they and a Hudson's Bay craft had tried to work it by placing nets and rafts on the surface of the water and exploding the gold-bearing rock above. Splendid specimens were obtained, but it could not be made to pay, so it was abandoned.

Having learnt from the Indians that the torrent at the head of the fiord was the outlet of a series of lakes high up in the mountains, I gained leave from the captain to explore them, and taking an Indian guide, we first attempted the banks of the torrent; but the huge boulders and deep cavities were impassable, and we retreated to the bush, where an ascent began which for difficulties of the kind could scarcely be beaten.

So dense was the undergrowth of wild raspberry and currant bushes, growing in the rank decay of the trees, that as we hacked our way we could see nothing beyond arm's-length. Next we toiled across the breast of a precipice—the sheer height on one hand, and on the other the depths beneath, a confused mass of forest giants in all stages of decay. The Indian wished to

turn back and said he had lost his way, but we held on, and at last stood by the water of a lovely mountain lake. We broke the ancient silence with three cheers, and then stripped and plunged into the exquisite transparence, where we floated between the two azures of water and sky, rejoicing to think that no other white man had ever done the like. On our return the captain declared that the lake should bear my name, but doubtless posterity has gone its own way in this important matter. I read in my diary that I rewarded the guide with an old shirt, whilst Nowell Salmon, my companion, presented him with some tobacco, and that he departed overjoyed.

On our return to Victoria, as the year closed, news was brought that a Scotsman had been murdered near the fort by two Indians of the distant Cowitchan and Naimo tribes, living near the two rivers which flow into the Gulf of Georgia, North of Victoria.

Justice must be done, and messengers were sent to the lodges demanding the murderers on pain of wholesale punishment. The answer was a refusal, with the assertion that the white man had insulted the squaws of the Indians and had merited his doom.

Here was a deadlock. The excuse was untenable, for the men had been seen close to the fort, and it was in the highest degree improbable that their squaws would be with them on such a journey.

Force was the only resort, and Captain Kuper assented to the Governor's wish that we should assist with an armed force from the *Thetis*. I fear the pity of this, one of the myriad tragedies of the red man's collision with civilisation, appealed to none of us at the time. Here was an expedition, and one of some difficulty, for the tribes could only be approached

through navigation quite unsuitable and impossible for a sailing frigate. I can remember nothing but pleasure and excitement. We embarked in two of the Hudson Bay Company's vessels—a small river steamer of primitive type, the *Beaver*, and a trading schooner, the *Recovery*, with her hold planked over to accommodate our men.

The Governor took command on board the *Beaver* with a body-guard of French Canadians and twenty of our Marines, whilst on board the *Recovery* was our first lieutenant, Sansum, with myself as his second in command, several junior officers, and eighty blue-jackets. Three large boats with guns ready for service were towed astern.

The *Beaver* taking the *Recovery* in tow, we proceeded slowly past Victoria into the Gulf of Georgia and towards the Cowitchan River. Our speed was, perhaps, two miles an hour; but who could grumble at delay amidst such scenery as opened on our astonished eyes ?—a maze of islets transfigured with snow, plumed with pines, sparkling with a fairy glitter of frost and sunshine, and all around enchanting bays and islets, and the blue channels of the interlacing sea, brooded over by the eternal silence of the Rockies.

Below deck our pleasures were of a more mundane order. There were six of us in the little cabin—a tight fit—and our host was the skipper, Jock Mitchell, a kindly Scotsman as ever followed the sea. His delight in fostering our ravenous appetites knew no bounds, and extraordinary and mysterious in their inception were the dishes he provided. I recall one apple-tart that was as the Sphinx's riddle, for Vancouver produced no apples, and tinned fruits as yet were not. It was hugely and unsuspectingly enjoyed, and then

some inquiring mind suggested a doubt, and we all "looked on each other with a wild surmise," which gradually stiffened into determination.

We collared Jock, and, in spite of his refusals and entreaties, sat upon him collectively and doggedly, until the truth came out, or rather was squeezed out.

"Laddies," he gasped, "ye have eaten naught but good taties with a squeeze o' drapped lime-juice." And so it was; and after that we took what the dear old fellow gave us, and were thankful.

The following afternoon we reached the Cowitchan River, and here, owing to the influence of our chief, a great powwow had been arranged with the incriminated tribe, who were to assemble on the morrow, bringing the culprit with them for the white man's justice, mitigated by the red man's power of resistance.

Day broke wet and sullen, but in order to gain a choice of position we made an early start and landed our forces, anchoring our boats so that their guns dominated the situation. A small tent was pitched for the Governor, where were deposited presents for the tribe, beside his pistols and cutlass, the use of either to depend on circumstances. Then, guarded by the Canadians and Marines, he and Lieutenant Sansum advanced to the front and waited.

Soon rolling down the river came the melancholy boom of the war-drums, and far-off cries resolved themselves into war-songs, as a fleet of large canoes, lashed together in triplets, paddled furiously round a bend of the river and headed for our position at full speed. The strange and fascinating sight is present with me still. The whale-backed downs of Hamp-

shire around me melt into air, and I see the snowy forests, the river, and over 200 tall warriors, their height exaggerated with head-plumes, faces terrifically painted with red ochre, decked with loin-ropes of shells which met their deer-skin leggings and clattered with every movement as they leaped from the canoes.

Instantly the Governor (a non-smoker) lit the pipe of council and smoked, watching them indifferently, with Sansum and two aides-de-camp at his side.

The indifference covered some anxiety, for without an instant's hesitation a large body of braves rushed up the hill-side, taking higher ground and completely outflanking us, a knowledge of tactics rendered somewhat disquieting by the array of glittering eyes and gun-barrels covering us. I desired to move our men, but it would have been ticklish work just then, and permission was refused.

The principal body of Indians formed up in our front, and three chiefs, each bearing a spear, advanced. Young as I was, I realised that I beheld a sight symbolic and representative: the chiefs, keen-eyed and stately, in spite of their barbarous dress, confronting the tall Scotsman, who, they well knew, had never quailed in danger nor faltered in justice. He raised his hand and spoke in Chinook dialect.

"Hearken, O chiefs. I am sent by King George, who is your friend, and who desires right only between your tribes and his men. If his men kill an Indian, they are punished. If your young men do likewise, they must also suffer. Give up the murderer, and let there be peace between the peoples, or I will burn your lodges and trample out your tribes!"

Not a sound but the Governor's voice. Then a chief lifted his spear and advanced a step, all the warriors

brandishing their weapons and rattling their loin-ropes, till the noise was as the crackling of a forest fire. At the first word dead silence fell, and the Governor calmly resumed his pipe, an attentive hearer.

The speech was the plea of provocation they had already put forward, and the Governor in reply promised a fair trial and due acquittal if their case were proved. Two mortal hours of heated entreaty and rhetoric and assertion followed, but finally the murderer was surrendered, and in somewhat striking fashion, for the warriors all sank to the ground, the culprit and his old father alone remaining standing and abashed. They were at once sent on board the *Beaver*.

Presents were then distributed, and, this ceremony over, the braves re-embarked, and with war-songs changed into shouts of joy, and much thunder of drums, paddled away up the river.

So far so good, but to secure the other murderer was a far more difficult business, and necessitated a journey to the Nanimo tribe, some twenty-five miles to the north.

We reached Nanimo on January 9, anchoring off the alluvial delta, through which by two channels the river reaches the bay. The tribe had agreed that the culprit should be given up on the following morning, and in the early dawn the canoes came stealing slowly down the current, the paddles striking the water in time to a rhythmic wail, the head-plumes white, and no war-paint, all these being signs of a peaceable intention. At the mouth of the river they came to a standstill, and not an inch farther would they venture until the Governor had publicly promised them a safe return.

The object of this demand was soon clear, for the

chiefs immediately boarded us, and without the man we sought.

An angry palaver ensued, and doubtless they would nave been detained as hostages but for the precaution they had taken.

However, there was no choice but to let them go, detaining their fur robes as pledges of surrender on the following day.

Meanwhile we learnt by a runner that the younger braves had pledged themselves to their comrade's safety, and it therefore occasioned no surprise when day dawned and the robes were unredeemed. We had, in fact, already begun our preparations for the march to the head-quarters of the tribe and the necessary destruction of their lodges.

The expedition immediately started, the Governor and Canadians taking the head of the column; and after an hour or two we found ourselves in a beautiful open valley leading to a formidable stockade enclosing an unusually large Indian lodge. The stockade was built of split pines, about 20 feet high, firmly sunk in the ground, and well braced together, with loopholes for guns between the interstices. A spacious platform ran round the inside about 6 feet from the top, and this was manned by armed warriors.

Lieutenant Sansum was for immediate attack, but the Governor refused, knowing that if we got the boats up, the place might be taken without bloodshed. Accordingly I was sent back to make the attempt, and after several hours' hard tracking by officers and men in the icy water, we got into the main stream and abreast the stockade.

Watchful eyes had followed our every movement, and intense anxiety was at once apparent. Not a word

was uttered, but silently a heavy sliding-door was pushed up, and at this wordless invitation we entered upon one of the strangest scenes imaginable. We stood in the middle of the great lodge, and the early twilight had fallen, so that the chief illuminant was the flicker of several fires, which sent their dancing light and shadow over the dusky interior. As our eyes accustomed themselves, we saw the silent Indians standing in the gloom of the wide lodge, massively formed as it was, roofed and carved, with something majestic in its simplicity and perfect adaptation to its purpose.

Four of us only had entered with the Governor, yet they laid down their arms and listened sullenly while he repeated his demand. Then one replied in their guttural dialect.

"It is well," he said, "it is well. But what can the old men do? The young men have hidden our brother. They have taken him far away, and our eyes have not followed their track. We cannot do what we would, for the young men are strong and we are weak."

This brought us up all standing. It was evidently true, and confirmed our information, and the Governor himself was nonplussed. The winter night, with an icy splendour of stars and frost, was closing in, and there was nothing for it but to bivouac and await events.

Our men were brought into the lodge, and under the influence of Jack's geniality even the Indian reserve thawed. Standing apart at first, they soon gathered round the fires, and supplemented our pork and biscuits with a welcome supply of salmon and potatoes. Bushels of the latter were cooked by heating large

stones red hot in a pit and covering them with mats, when, after filling the pit with potatoes, water was poured in, and the steam confined with skins and mats over all. Oh, the comfort, the abundance of that meal, after the fatigues of the day! It stands pre-eminent in my gastronomic memories, and when it was over grog was not wanting, and the pipe and song went round, our hosts joining with their deep guttural where they could, and the Canadians singing the songs their ancestors had brought from the France they were never to see more. It was strange to hear "Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres" and "Malbrouck" awaking the echoes of the Indian roof and startling the frosty silence! Satisfied at last, warm and dry, we slept till morning broke, and with the earliest dawn the half-breed runners were sent on the trail of the young men. It was not difficult to strike, for pursuit had not been anticipated; and as they pushed through the snowy solitudes of the forest they hit an encampment where the embers were scarcely cold. Their Indian blood leaped at the sight, and, like sleuth-hounds, they followed the tracks, until one single trail separated from the others.

On this they fastened, covering mile after mile with the swift, easy pace, untiring and unresting, which is known to all who have watched these men at work.

The track led to a large stream and was lost, to be regained on the snow-covered boulders higher up, and then came a stretch of deep water, which it was agreed that the fugitive must have crossed by swimming. Reaching the shallow water, they struck the trail once more, and at last in an open glade they ran him to earth, hidden under the roots of a fallen tree, and so brought him, bound and wearied, to the stockade.

It was pitiful enough to see the splendid wild man captive among his own people. What they felt I know not. What they evinced was the stoical indifference of their tradition. Not a sound was uttered, not a look showed pity or anger as we closed round our prisoner and set off on the return march.

Next day a jury was empanelled on board the *Beaver*, and the prisoners arraigned, and then came a touch of nature. Canoes brought the women alongside the *Beaver*, and, seeing the men on deck, they uttered heart-rending cries, the mother and wife of the Nanimo beating their breasts and tearing their hair with an abandonment of grief very touching to witness. There was no chance from the first, for the accused admitted their guilt, and the fact that their squaws were not with them at the time. Some sudden wild impulse had carried them away, and there was no more to be said. Death, of course, was the sentence.

That afternoon a gallows was erected on the island at the entrance of Protection Bay, and here they met their death with steady fortitude, in the fashion of brave men all the world over—a fashion varying with neither race nor time.

The piteous sequence came when the old mother, tottering to her dead son's feet, kissed and clung to them, and implored that the fatal rope might be given to her. So small a mercy! And when her prayer was granted, she put it round her neck and pressed it to her lips, whilst her tears ran in torrents, and some of our own eyes were not dry. The warriors stood silent, their faces stern and quiet—

> "Because they would not stain with grief
> The death-song of an Indian chief."

Then all moved towards the woods and vanished

slowly into the gathering gloom, bearing their dead. Such was the old Vancouver.

As I lean backward the vision of the forest primeval and its children fades, and there arises in its place the roar of civilisation, the teeming life of the cities that are and will be throned on the North Pacific.

So the world changes, so our feverish activities fill the space between the two silences; but to an old sailor, who recalls many men and things in the peace of his last days, it is difficult sometimes to distinguish phantom and reality, and easier to believe that the pines are still waving in their solitude, and the rivers running undisturbed to the great ocean.

CHAPTER XII

H.M.S. "THETIS"—SMUGGLING—NORTH-WEST COAST OF MEXICO

"Gold goeth in at any gate but heaven's."—BRIDGES.

AT the end of January, 1853, our stay of eight months at Vancouver came to an end. We left for San Francisco, taking with us some immense spars to be sold there for the benefit of the ship's fund; and a goodly sum they brought, for the city was mainly one of wood in those days, and timber precious. The great sandy hills were unoccupied, and additional space was found by filling up the tidal waters on the beach. Piles were driven and built, furnishing the singular spectacle of old stranded ships in their rear inland, which were used both as homes and offices. It was a lawless place in those days; every man carried his six-shooter, and used it not infrequently without any provocation, firing up and down the streets in sheer devilry.

We, however, were royally entertained at balls and with free drinks. The Yankee girls astonished our fellows with their downrightness. One, in replying to her partner, who had modestly remarked that the English and American style of dancing differed, and he was afraid he was making rather a mess of it, said: "Wa-al, I guess you are, and I will just go and right away finish it with someone else," and accordingly left

him standing in blank amazement. A month later saw us at Mazatlan, on the north-west coast of Mexico, to take our turn in collecting a freight of gold and silver specie for transmission to England.

This service, happily now by Order in Council virtually abrogated, brought into active operation the worst weaknesses of poor human nature. The bare facts were that North-West Mexico, with silver deposits from which was then drawn half of the whole world's supply, with also large quantities of gold, could only reach the European market by the sea route —round Cape Horn—from its ports at the entrance of the Gulf of California, and to send a freight so valuable in the merchant vessels of those days was practically impossible.

It was tried, but the specie had been robbed, and in some instances wholly lost, as notably in the case of the *Eliza Cornish*, an English vessel which was seized in the Straits of Magellan by Chilian pirates. Therefore the only alternative was to embark the specie in men-of-war, and there were none other than English ready for the service.

Had the Mexican Government been stable, strong and equitable, and possessed of ordinary commercial honesty, this traffic might have been carried on in an honourable and profitable manner to both parties, but for the previous quarter of a century Mexico had been in a state of anarchy.

At this time the disastrous war with the United States had just ended, the Dictator, Santa Anna, had fled, and his flight plunged everything into confusion. Not infrequently in one day the Custom-House at Mazatlan, or San Blas, was occupied by two or three separate parties, each intent on feathering its own

nest, and therefore adding to the exorbitant percentage on the exportation of silver. I have known the duties thus to rise in a few days from 2½ per cent. to 8 per cent. Added to this, the Custom-House authorities were wholly corrupt, and thought little of forging Government passes for the specie. These they sold to the merchants, and they were accepted by the captains of our men-of-war as genuine, though it was perfectly well known they were not. The shippers on their part resorted to every possible dodge to defraud the men-of-war. A common trick was to soak the silver bars in water, when they became much heavier. This fraud could be discovered only by striking them with a polished hammer, the polish being dulled if water had been used.

Captain Wellesley (afterwards Sir George), of the *Dædalus*, discovered another venerable fraud. He was hoisting in bars of silver, lashed two by two, when the lashings gave way and the bars separated. It was immediately seen that between each couple of bars (which were hollowed out in the centre) was hidden a small bar of gold, and, as a matter of fact, all the silver bars embarked concealed gold in like manner. The gold was taken out, the bars relashed and delivered to the agent at Panama in numbers according to the bill of lading. A few hours later the agent arrived on board in an agony, and a scene ensued which can be better imagined than described. Finally matters were compounded by an agreement on his part that double freight should be paid on the gold. This was the state of affairs when the *Thetis* arrived, giving the captain the chance of adding in a few weeks a large sum to his own credit, whilst his Commander-in-Chief and that noble institution Greenwich Hospital would

each benefit ¼ per cent. on the freight collected. But this could not be done by keeping the strictly correct course of only accepting specie tendered in an absolutely legal manner. Had we done this the specie would have remained in the country, whereas we shipped about $3,000,000. Our captain was as upright a man as any, but had no notion of standing on half measures, and he resolved, as all his predecessors in the West had done before him, to connive at smuggling, and to employ all the resources of the ship for the purpose. It was to be a case of diamond cut diamond.

It soon became known that the *Thetis* was ready to receive specie anyhow and anywhere.

There were strict orders from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from the Admiralty, and the Commander-in-Chief against the slightest irregularities in embarking specie. We knew that there was a continual stream of complaint from the Mexican Government, increasing in volume as the duty was increased, but human nature asserted itself when the profits were so great and the custom so universal. Secret information was given to the captain that on such or such a point on the coast specie would be found, ready for embarkation, perhaps fifty or more miles from the ship. Our boat, in charge of a lieutenant, would leave at midnight, anchor off an open beach, and exchange signals with a large armed party. The officer and some men would then swim on shore with a line, by which in a very short time specie amounting to perhaps $100,000 would be hauled off and safely taken to the ship, and this work was repeated again and again.

At other times officers went on shore in uniform, with a sailor carrying an official letter addressed to

the Consul; they would enter a private house, fill the belts which they wore with $1,200 each, and then return to the ship. On one occasion we received, apparently in quite a legal manner, $400,000 from the Custom-House, but the officers in charge took an official receipt for half the sum only, having accepted a bribe of $6,000 dollars to charge duty on the lesser amount. Perhaps the most flagrant case was that of $4,000 being shipped on the plea of being the proceeds of the officers' pay bills; but at other times officers, when on shore, were given a substantial sum to smuggle off gold or jewellery.

The end of all this discreditable work was that in two months we had accumulated about £600,000, of which the captain's profit was worth about £8,000, and the Commander-in-Chief and Greenwich Hospital received about £1,500 each. Then another ship took our place, and so the practice continued for many a long year.

The *Thetis*, in common with all Her Majesty's ships that for some years had collected freight on the Mexican coast, was called upon to reply to the Mexican Government's complaints; but it was evident that if the English captains had been irregular, their action was forced upon them by corrupt and venal officials, and equally evident that had they not so acted, the commerce of the world would have suffered by the withdrawal of its supply of silver.

Anyhow, nothing came of it, and the game went on. But, however advantageous to many a needy officer and beneficial to Greenwich Hospital, it certainly was not to the moral advantage of any who were concerned in this particular form of privateering.

CHAPTER XIII

TEPIC

"So fast, so far the water drave,
The heart had hardly time to beat
Before a shallow seething wave
Sobbed in the grasses at our feet;
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it broke against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea."

INGELOW.

HAPPILY my gunnery duties kept me clear of the specie-getting business, and therefore I had no difficulty in obtaining permission to visit Tepic, a large town fifty miles from San Blas, where a rich silver-mine was owned by an English firm — Baron, Forbes and Co.

A party of eight started, mounted on serviceable mules, and, crossing the San Blas River, ascended by a steep mule-track over a series of precipitous hills through tropical jungle, and emerged on a level path looking down on the delta of the San Blas River, the *Thetis* a tiny toy in the harbour.

We refreshed ourselves at the half-way village and rested till the evening, when we again started, hoping to reach Tepic before midnight.

The distant thunder and lowering sky warned us that we should probably have wet jackets, but this did not trouble us. Our guide (an Englishman who, as a boy

on board H.M.S. *Herald*, had deserted, and for ten years lived the life of a Mexican ranchero), however, did not look so happy, and kept casting anxious glances about him. We were then descending a ravine at the bottom of which ran a slender stream, trickling its tiny way amongst great boulders and rough stones. "We have two more of these ravines to get over," our guide said seriously, "but if the rain overtakes us they will be impassable"—a prognostication which seemed simply laughable, or so we thought in our ignorance. Heavy drops were already falling, but our mules were fresh, and we pressed them and got over the next ravine without difficulty. And then the storm was upon us, the water pouring down the mountain-side in sheets as solid as grey glass.

As we came to the last ravine that lay between us and Tepic, we stopped, startled at the amazing sight, for, instead of a slender trickling stream, a roaring torrent of muddy water, ugly and dangerous, lay before us. The guide, a young officer, and I were the first to reach it, and after much hesitation he decided on crossing, provided we followed exactly in his footsteps. We ventured in, and regretted it too late. Brilliant flashes of lightning showed a fearful hurry of water, and I saw my shipmate's mule swept instantly off his feet, and with his rider rolled over and over until the torrent swept them away and they disappeared. Nothing whatever could be done in aid. Our own next step was a matter of deadly anxiety. The guide's mule staggered, but the sharp rowels dug in, with a lifting hand, saved him. My mule, covered by the seething foam, seemed lost; but I could only cling on frantically and hope for the best, and—how I knew

not—I landed safely on the other shore. The rest of our party wisely remained on the safe side, in great alarm for our sakes.

I said to the guide: "We must go down-stream and look for our man." He declined, thinking it useless, but I fortunately insisted. We had hardly gone 50 yards before we heard, above the roar of the waters, a voice crying for help, and there, within a dozen feet of the bank, on the top of a rock, was the poor fellow. He was not a praying man, but he prayed then, though it did not seem humanly possible that the prayer could be heard, for every moment the waters were rising with terrible speed, and threatened to sweep him off his slender refuge. It was some minutes before he realised that help was at hand.

And I own I could not myself imagine how it could reach him, but the guide knew better. In an instant he unwound the Mexican lasso he carried about his body, and the rope shot from his hand, uncoiling as it flew. It missed in the thrust of the storm, and once more he whirled it round over his head, allowing dexterously for the opposing force, and it fled like an arrow, dropping the noose over our man's shoulders. I never saw a piece of skill more marvellous and beautiful. He adjusted it for dear life, and by main strength we dragged him to the bank, nearly drowning him before he reached it. I never saw anyone in a more exhausted condition. He told us he was swept from his mule and washed under the lee of the rock. He considered the possibility of trying to reach the bank, but it was certain death, and he had completely given up hope when we came in sight. I mounted him behind me when he had rested, and so we proceeded to the nearest rancho. In less than half an

hour his own mule came trotting up, sorely bruised and bleeding, but evidently overjoyed at once more joining his companions. The sagacity of these animals is marvellous. In the storm and pitchy darkness we lost our way. At once the guide threw the reins on his mule's neck, and the wise creature led us back to the narrow path. Farther on we came to a small rancho, where we got food and fire, then lay down on native rugs sheltered by the wide projecting eaves of the house, and slept a deep sleep.

In the morning the air of the heights greeted us fresh, bright, and beautiful; and we bathed in a mountain stream, and were preparing to depart with the kindliest feelings of gratitude, when our guide found his knife and money missing. He drew his pistol instantly, and, holding it to our host's head, demanded that both should be returned on the spot, or he would shoot. I shall never forget my astonishment at the sudden change to melodrama, nor the shamelessness of the celerity with which the purse and the knife made their appearance. Evidently there was no feeling of wrong-doing on either side. It was simply a case of diamond cut diamond, as between host and guest.

Some fifteen miles farther brought us in our muddy, ragged clothes to the garden-terraced Tepic, where Mr. Forbes gave us a hearty welcome, and rigged us up decently until the rest of our party with the baggage mule should arrive. We had looked forward to several days' stay in this delightful place, 1,700 feet above the level of the sea; but the fates were against us, for we heard from Mr. Forbes that the $600,000 which he had arranged to embark in the *Thetis* would now be withheld in consequence of the Government's

breaking faith. He had already paid 3 per cent. on their promise that it should be legally shipped, and, having secured this sum, they immediately clapped on another 5 per cent., which Mr. Forbes absolutely refused to pay. I knew that Captain Kuper was only waiting for these dollars to sail, and also that there was much fever on board, and so I, being the senior of the party, decided on returning at once.

At 1 p.m. we bade adieu to our hospitable host and to beautiful Tepic. With the guide I pressed on ahead, for I was anxious to get a daylight look at the gorge where the torrent had so nearly proved fatal. There it was, in all its ruggedness, again a gentle little streamlet meandering amongst the stones, and nothing more than a child's playmate; but 20 feet above, on its scarred precipitous banks, the swept earth and torn and disfigured vegetation showed what a mighty and destructive force it could become after a few hours of tropical rain.

We arrived at San Blas to find how well-timed our return had been, for the fever was quickly increasing amongst our men. It did not leave us until half our ship's company had been prostrated, and four had answered their last muster.

Fairly homeward bound, it was pleasant uninterrupted sailing to Panama and Valparaiso; but one day it became necessary to "fill powder," and as a rule the gunnery lieutenant superintended this operation, which always took place in the magazine at night. It happened to be my middle watch, and I asked the captain whether I should take charge, as usual. I was told to keep watch and leave the matter to the gunner. At 2 a.m. he reported to me that the work was done, and that the sweepings of powder, together with

a damp 8-pound cartridge, had been thrown overboard. Just before four o'clock a sheet of flame was seen forward, and a heavy explosion shook the ship. It seemed a perfect mystery, but the shout was raised, "The ship is on fire!" whilst the cries and groans proved something serious had happened. After ringing the fire-bell, and taking the usual precaution of putting the ship before the wind, I rushed forward to discover the cause. It was evident there was no fire, but the injured men said that an explosion had taken place in the "head." Eventually it was discovered that the gunner's boy, instead of throwing the powder overboard, had tilted it down the head-shoot; there it jammed, and a man clandestinely smoking knocked his pipe out over it, when the burning ashes fell on the flannel cartridge, and the whole of the powder blew up. The light woodwork forward was all shattered, and several men were badly scorched.

The singular thing was that the man who had caused the mischief had been deeply scarred with small-pox; his face was now badly burnt, and on recovery it was found to have lost all traces of small-pox, and he had a face as smooth as a child's—a beauty treatment to which few would, however, consent to submit.

The admiral's inspection at Valparaiso passed over satisfactorily. I remember that our grand old captain of the forecastle, as fine a seaman as ever trod a deck, happened to be asked by the admiral how much money he expected to receive on paying off. He replied: "Don't know, yer honour—never kept no accounts since I have been in the sarvice." He was asked what he did with his slop ticket. Perfectly respectfully, but in the bluntest way possible, he said: "Puts un in an

old hat and lets un sweat." That type of sailor has vanished for ever.

The next inspection was in England, when I had the gratification of the gunnery captain's acknowledgment of three years' successful gunnery work before the pennant came down.

CHAPTER XIV

BALTIC, 1854

"No mortal man can boast of perfect vision,
But the one mole-blind thing is indecision."

LOWELL.

ON March 13, after a five weeks' spell at home, I joined the paddle-wheel sloop *Driver*, 6 guns, as first lieutenant. She was commanded by the Hon. Arthur Cochrane.

War with Russia was imminent, and to be bound for the Baltic under the command of the able and ambitious son of such a man as Lord Dundonald was a very bright prospect indeed. It made easy and pleasant the hard work of fitting out at Sheerness during the severe winter of 1854.

In less than three weeks we were ready for sea with one important exception—men and officers. Indeed, England was then (as ever) totally unprepared to meet the drain of a great war. Sixteen line-of-battle ships and a vast number of frigates and smaller vessels were required for the Baltic alone, needing some 18,000 men; but where were the 18,000 to man them? Public opinion resented revival of the press-gang; therefore the only alternative was the offer of a large bounty, and by this means the ships were filled with counter-jumpers and riff-raff of all sorts, and rarely a sailor amongst them. What this meant

only those who had to do the necessary slave-driving can tell.

The Russians, it was said, had in the Baltic twenty-six sail-of-the-line, manned by well-drilled and experienced crews; and if this were true, and had they not been locked up by the ice in Cronstadt, there is not the slightest doubt that our fleet must have avoided them or have been defeated. We had certainly no time to lick our men into shape, so it was fortunate that later experience showed (as it generally seems to do) that the Russians had extremely weak points of their own. We have trusted to this fact for many years in our dealings with other countries, but after the frightful object-lesson of Tsushima it is obvious that we may trust to it once too often, and regret our blindness for ever.

In the *Driver* I had, however, secured a few of the *Thetis* men to leaven the lump, and they truly were a refreshment to my anxious eyes as I considered the rest of my material. We may have had twenty seamen as a nucleus. The rest were long-shore fellows, and when Admiral Berkeley—one of the Lords of the Admiralty—came aboard and told us that the Russians were at sea and probably in a few days we should be in action, there was a strong dash of anxiety in our satisfaction. The commander pointed out that we were still many short of our complement, and Admiral Berkeley promised it should be completed at once. It was, in a sense, for next day a motley batch came on board, and—like them or lump them—we sailed immediately to join the fleet, then making its way under Sir Charles Napier to the Baltic.

Fortunately, Admiral Berkeley's rumour proved to be a false one, for, apart from an incompetent and sea-

sick crew, we had not enough officers to meet the casualties of an action, especially as our commander had his father's instinct for attacking at any odds.

We had in the executive branch only two lieutenants and the master—not one mate or other subordinate officer; but there were three warrant officers sent to do midshipman's duty. In this dilemma the work fell unconscionably hard on such officers as there were. My duties as first lieutenant were responsible enough in themselves, but to these were added the entire gunnery work, together with the 4 to 8—*i.e.*, both dog-watches and the morning watch. Sailors will know what this means, especially with a ship's company of "Bashi-bazouks," as the newly-raised men were then called. However, with such possibilities as lay ahead, nothing seemed beyond our power.

On April 2 we were at Copenhagen, our duty being to tow the sailing-vessels through the Belts as they arrived. From Copenhagen we joined the fleet in Kigoe Bay, where, war having now been declared, the notorious signal flew, limping, I own, a long way after its great original—"Lads, sharpen your cutlasses, and the day's your own." It sounded a little ironical in the light of later events.

However, all that night and for days after the grind-stones whirled until an invisible edge was put on every cutlass and the officers' swords were like razors, for we all fully believed in Charlie Napier's dash, and little thought that rust only was to spoil their brilliancy.

The steam fleet assembled under his command consisted of thirteen screw line-of-battle ships, six screw frigates, and eight paddle-wheel frigates and sloops. The sailing-ships were six sail-of-the-line. From Kigoe Bay we accompanied the fleet to Elsnabben, the élite

of the fleet watching the edge of the ice in the Gulf of Finland, and the main body cruising off Gothland.

We were stationed to windward with other small craft, and truly the splendid array of warships was an impressive sight; but, to our utter astonishment, beyond keeping in line of battle, tacking, and wearing, no fleet evolutions of any kind were attempted.

This was the first thing that shook our faith in our chief, and the scandalised Mediterranean and Channel Fleet officers prophesied all sorts of disasters if the Russian fleet came out. Meanwhile, Admiral Chads, who had his flag hoisted in the *Edinburgh*, kept a sharp eye on the gunnery exercises, and went from ship to ship striving to make the men efficient.

The *Driver's* principal work was continually chasing strange sail, and at first, as a novelty and with some hope of prize-money, it was pleasant enough; but when weeks passed and never a glimpse of the Russian flag rewarded us, it became a trifle monotonous. At last it seemed that the luck was turning, for after a long chase we overhauled a real Russian barque. I was sent on board, and having ascertained her nationality, I asked the date of leaving her last port.

Boldly they said, "April 16," and joyfully I heard it, for this was well outside the date allowed by Her Majesty's declaration for the departure of the enemy's ships without risk of capture, and the cargo happened to be a valuable one. I hailed our ship, and announced her without doubt or misgiving as a lawful prize. And so she would have been but for one unfortunate fact—the Russians go by the old calendar, and their April 16 is neither more nor less than our April 5. She was therefore no prize, and it took me some time to live down the scoffs of all hands, beginning with the captain.

From Gothland the fleet proceeded to Hango, at the entrance of the Gulf of Finland, where a futile demonstration was made by three paddlers against the forts. It was an injudicious proceeding altogether, for, after receiving some trifling injury, they hauled off, giving the Russians the right to claim a victory. The vacillation of our chief had by this time become a general subject of comment—so much so that on one occasion when I was dining with one of his most distinguished captains he did not scruple to say: "I fear the admiral is physically incapable of efficiently commanding this important fleet."

It was not that we expected the admiral to play the Russian game by rashness, such as attacking stone forts or earthworks with our wooden ships, but all looked for some definite plan of campaign.

By the middle of May, Helsingfors and Cronstadt had been reconnoitred. We knew that the Russian fleet was divided—seven sail-of-the-line at Helsingfors and eighteen at Cronstadt, all sailing-vessels; these, with a few good paddle-wheel frigates and sloops, representing their fleet, whilst the arrival of the French ships under Admiral Duchesne had raised the allied force to twenty-eight sail-of-the-line.

Our screw-ships alone in the calm summer seas of the Baltic would have disposed of the whole Russian fleet, and hopelessly divided as they were, the game was in our own hands. To the want of grasp of this idea the whole muddle of the Baltic Campaign may be traced, for in sailing-ships alone we possessed a reserve force capable of important service. From this a body of 4,000 or 5,000 men, with guns, field-pieces, and rocket-tubes, could be landed in a few hours with perfect safety, provided that their ships' guns enfiladed

the approach of Russian reinforcements, and that the garrison to be attacked was inferior in number.

Such forts there were at Hango and the Aland Islands; but already two precious months of the short Northern summer had gone by, and the inaction oppressed us all.

In these circumstances we in the *Driver* plucked up our spirits when we received instructions to place ourselves under the orders of that most energetic officer, Captain B. J. Sulivan, of the surveying steam-sloop *Lightning*, to assist in surveying the approaches to the great Fort of Bomarsund, with which Russia held the Aland Islands. The two paddle-wheel frigates which had reconnoitred the forts six weeks before were too large to effect any practical survey in the narrow waters of the islands; but the *Lightning*—a little bit of a craft of only 360 tons, and drawing 9 feet of water—and we, of 1,056 tons, only drawing 14 feet 6 inches, were well adapted for the work before us.

Our orders were to examine the forts and sound alongside them—rather an awakening order, considering that Bomarsund was a first-class fortress, there was no darkness at that time of year, and we only carried two guns of any account.

However, it kept us on the alert and ready for action. Lieutenant Theorell, of the Swedish Navy, came on board as interpreter.

On June 29 we were among the network of islets forming the Aland Archipelago. It was resolved to avoid the direct approach to Bomarsund, and to thread our way by the intricate channels to the east of Lumper Island, finally leading to the front of the fort. The Russians would not expect us to take that route, and we therefore hoped to find it unguarded. None but a

seaman of unusual skill and nerve would have attempted it, for hidden rocks were strewn in the channels, and these were besides so narrow that in places the yard-arms almost touched the pines which clustered on the rocky islets on either side. But the tideless waters, with the silver transparency of a Highland loch, were in our favour, and with the little *Lightning* ahead and controlling we cautiously made our venture.

At first the canal-like lines of clear deep water gave us confidence, when suddenly rocks appeared under the *Lightning's* bow, and it was "Stern all" at once; but room was found to creep on beside them.

Anxious to get information of the whereabouts of the Russian gunboats, and as to what islands had been garrisoned, Captain Sulivan went on shore; but boats' crews and villagers alike fled.

We were more fortunate a little later and at another considerable village, for we found some invalids and others attending them, and having conveyed to them through Lieutenant Theorell that we would harm neither them nor theirs, they mustered up courage and became friendly enough. Amongst them were a few girls, pretty and well dressed, and quite sufficiently conscious of our admiration. We bought supplies from them, and had their promise to let the other islanders know our friendly intentions; but they knew nothing of Russian gunboats, and told us the soldiers were only in the immediate vicinity of the forts.

It was evening, and we anchored off the village, watching the boats and peaceful islands in strange bright twilight all the night long. Next day the navigation was even more intricate and twisting. The islands were higher and more rocky, and a few riflemen among the trees could have completely barred

the way, for no effective reply would have been possible.

Once we struck a rock, and hung for a time. Then was their chance. They did not take it, and yet Bomarsund, with its garrison of 2,500 men, was not five miles off.

We all agreed that the governor of the fort was our best friend, though he deserved hanging by his own Government. Then, passing Michelso Island, we at last opened the great fort and its protecting smaller ones. The fort, mounting 92 guns in double tiers of windows like casements, with a sloping wooden roof to fend off the winter snow, looked exactly like a terrace of ordinary dwelling-houses. We anchored just out of gun-range.

It was formidable indeed from the sea, with its rear protected by the three supporting forts—Presto on a separate island, Nottich and Tzee on hills in the rear. These were grim-looking constructions in granite, each mounting 24 guns in two tiers. Captain Sulivan, supported by our boats, ran a line of soundings in his gig well within reach of the forts, while, strange to say, the Russians took no notice of his daring; but when he landed at Michelso to sketch the forts, boats with a party of soldiers were sent to cut him off. They had not, however, reckoned on our boats, and narrowly escaped capture themselves.

This showed clearly that we had little to fear from riflemen or gunboats, so we ran back to the entrance of Ango Channel to find a passage leading to the north of Bomarsund, that we might observe its defences from the rear.

We found the channel we needed, but it was nearly blocked at the entrance with a rock, and it was pretty

to see (as Pepys would say) the manœuvring necessary to slide round it and into the river-like water beyond, only 50 yards wide and fragrant with the scents of the overhanging forest. Three miles of this delightful progress brought us to the north of Presto Island, where we anchored about 800 yards off, and in a position to look comfortably into the rear of the big fort and note its defences. It was within range of our two big guns, and the wish to blaze away could scarcely be resisted; but Captain Sulivan, with all his dash, had the coolest head imaginable, and knew that paper pellets might as well have been thrown as shot at such a range, when the mark was a granite fort with bomb-proof roof.

Yet, five weeks later, three of our cruising paddlers bombarded Bomarsund, and, after firing away all their ammunition and setting fire to the wooden roof, hauled off with five men wounded, and, joining the fleet, flew the signal, "Bomarsund successfully bombarded"; while, on the other side, the Russians naturally claimed a victory, and in derision painted black patches where the English shot had glanced off the face of the fort. Our business, however, was to survey and report, and with his usual energy, Captain Sulivan set to work in his gig, running lines of soundings well within 2,000 yards of the fort, and all (to our astonishment) perfectly undisturbed by the enemy.

From the cliffs of a rocky islet and from our own mastheads we fixed the position of the three supporting forts, and found that they were commanded by an unoccupied hill immediately in their rear; in fact, there was no provision for defence on the land side beyond the circular forts having an all-round fire. The rear of the big fort was merely brick masonry, and there

were easy landing-places both north and south of the fort well out of range.

We came to the conclusion that the Russians were like rats in a trap, whilst we commanded the sea, and could land a superior force in their rear; but from the sea Bomarsund was invulnerable.

As 4,000 or 5,000 men could be landed without lessening the ability of the screw fleet to hold the Russian ships in check, we naturally assumed that this design would be carried out. A week or ten days at the outside would have sufficed, for directly the small forts fell the big one was bound to surrender. Two months later, when it leaked out that 10,000 French troops had been ordered from France for the work, we could scarcely believe what we heard. It was as if a Nasmyth hammer were used to crush an egg. Even our irresolute chief had leaned to this view, but, under the influence of the French admiral, who desired credit for the French arms, he gave way, and so was lost to the Navy the sole opportunity of action in the Baltic Campaign of 1854.

CHAPTER XV

BALTIC, 1854—*continued*

"And so the long inglorious feat of arms
Burnt itself out to its ignoble close,
Better undone than done to such an end."

L. H.

We spent another delightful week in surveying the channels by which Captain Sulivan intended the attacking line of battle-ships to approach Bomarsund. A bolder piece of strategic surveying was never made, but it was not all hard work. We had the pleasantest relations with the friendly Alanders. Captain Sulivan's general character won their entire confidence, and naturally enough, for their small sloops and boats (which our other ships destroyed when they had the chance) were safe with us. His view was that nothing could be gained by ruining these poor creatures; nor, indeed, could it. I had made his acquaintance five years before at the Falkland Islands, and now used to accompany him on his shore excursions, where he always took a supply of tracts and Testaments in Finnish to distribute, finding that they were very welcome in those lonely regions. Once an intelligent girl told us she had been forced, with most of the other villagers, to work on the forts at Bomarsund at carrying sand to lay under the wooden roofs, and that this sand was laid 4 feet deep, rendering them invulner-

able to any vertical fire our ships could throw—a useful piece of information.

On June 19 we rejoined the fleet at Hango, and were proud of the praise which Captain Sulivan's report gave the *Driver*. On June 12 we made a close reconnaissance of Helsingfors and Revel with our sister-ships—*Bulldog* and *Basilisk*—and found additional forts in construction, with the Russian ships moored to protect the harbour, but without appearance of being ready for sea. On June 24 the combined fleets proceeded to reconnoitre Cronstadt, and on June 26 the fleet anchored about ten miles from the forts. Captain Sulivan, still in the little *Lightning*, was given command of the inshore squadron, and under him they were indefatigable at reconnoitring. They ascertained that the Russians had no force equal to ours, and were merely placed to resist an attack, and for no other purpose.

On June 30 Sir C. Napier, with the captains of the fleet, came on board the *Driver* to make a personal reconnaissance of the forts. Captain Sulivan, in the *Lightning*, led us. Chairs were placed for the admiral in convenient places, and on one of these he straightway sat down and fell fast asleep.

Indeed, it was pitiable to see his bodily infirmity when everyone else was so keenly on the alert. The nap lasted some considerable time, and the engines were thoughtfully stopped until he awoke. Captain Sulivan was then called on board, and even his energy, as he pointed out the strength of the place and the ships all moored for its defence, failed to keep our chief wide awake, and he nodded incessantly. He was then sixty-eight years old—just one year younger than Lord Howe—on the glorious 1st of June. The

reconnaissance completed, we took the admiral back to his magnificent flag-ship, feeling depressed enough from what we had witnessed. It was indeed impossible to hope much from a leader in his condition.

On July 2 the fleet returned to Helsingfors, where we remained nearly three weeks. We were once more placed under Captain Sulivan's orders to return to the Aland Islands, where we had a busy time buoying and marking out the intricate channels for the big ships. On July 30 the French troops arrived, and there ensued a scene of saluting, cheering, and general glorification worthy only of a great victory, but perhaps necessary for the purposes of the *entente cordiale.*

In all conscience, the force was now sufficient; but there was yet another hitch, the French general declining to move until his artillery and sappers should arrive, these being in two French ships that had lagged behind.

Therefore for a weary week some 25,000 men and a big fleet waited for 500 additional men to crush 2,500.

On August 5 they came, and the investment of Bomarsund began. Again Captain Sulivan chose us to work with him in the only hazardous employment, that of getting the ships into position and the troops disembarked. And here let me record the unanimous opinion of the officers of the fleet that the whole success of the enterprise was dependent on Captain Sulivan's marvellous skill in bringing line-of-battle ships where it was thought a passage was impossible. I, for one, learnt at this time many and many a lesson, which I used afterwards with reminiscent gratitude amongst coral reefs instead of granite rocks. On August 8 we embarked General Harry Jones (who had been sent out with his staff and 800 marines and

sappers, divided amongst ourselves and three French steamers under Captain Sulivan's orders), and passed round to the northern landing-place, off which Admiral Chads, with his flag flying in the *Edinburgh*, was anchored to prevent the possibility of any sortie from the fort. Two thousand French marines in other ships followed, and the force immediately landed.

Thus were the unfortunate Russians surrounded by some 13,000 men, not to speak of the fleet on their front. Four days were occupied in preparing the batteries, the French chasseurs keeping up such a hail of rifle bullets that our men received no hurt, and the work went on without interruption.

On August 14 the bombardment began. Captain Cochrane had been attached to the French general as A.D.C., and I was able to visit our naval battery as an amateur and watch the proceedings, which, as a spectacle, were very interesting. Whilst our few guns, protected by a natural rock glacis, showed only for a moment their black muzzles as they hurled shot after shot against the great granite targets of the forts, one could not help pitying the unhappy Russians, and deploring the hopeless, aimless slaughter.

First Fort Tzee surrendered to the fire of the French chasseurs, and it was not long before Fort Nottich realized the absolute folly of resistance and followed the example.

I accompanied the force which took possession, and the fort was a sickening sight, for the main destruction was caused by the lumps of granite driven in by the shot. The many dead had thus been frightfully crushed and mangled, and the wounded, for the same reason, were in a pitiable condition.

Everything possible and merciful was done for the

survivors, and it may be conceded that they had lost no honour. The question is, Had we gained any? and I am certainly at a loss to answer. One man, and one only, had been killed on our side.

Up to this time Presto on its island had been let alone, but now over 800 men with four guns were landed at the back of the island, and Captain Ramsay turned his guns on the fort at a range of about 1,500 yards. It was badly knocked about, and the roof fired. The Russian general, seeing this, and the preparations made to shell the big fort from its rear, surrendered unconditionally, and could certainly have done no otherwise.

Immediately a rush was made to get inside, and the fort was found absolutely uninjured. Of the myriad shot and shell from the fleet, not one had penetrated either sides or roof. The half-dozen guns in the rear had done the whole business in less than two days. Once inside, the lust for loot spread like wildfire. I believe the officers' private effects were spared as much as possible, but everything else was seized before sentries could be placed and order restored.

The Orthodox church in the fort was fitted up with great beauty, and adorned with many splendid paintings—especially I recall one of great size over the altar, the frame being a curious double one, in which were set exquisite little sacred pictures. The altar service of solid silver was instantly looted, French and English alike struggling for it. The pictures were cut out of their frames, and later I obtained two by purchase from a bluejacket—works of considerable interest.

The altar picture, in size about 10 feet by 8, an officer wrapped round his body and got clear off.

It would be interesting to know its whereabouts, and that of the communion plate.

As soon as the Russians had surrendered, the admiral landed, and took up his position outside the fort to witness the capitulation to the French. The prisoners were surrounded by the French soldiers (who looked Lilliputian beside their tall captives), and were conveyed to the transports for passage to England.

The *Driver* was next attached to a small squadron to effect a reconnaissance of Abo, the capital of East Finland; but to find Abo at all with our incorrect charts was no easy matter as we threaded our way through the countless islets lying between it and Bomarsund.

Eventually we found the mouth of the River Aurajoki, on the banks of which Abo is situated. Across its mouth was a floating boom, supported on each side by earthworks and batteries, manned by a large force. We pushed in as far as the shallow water would allow, and drew their fire at a harmless range. It was a place where a landing force must fight their own way, unprotected by the ships, and therefore was safe from attack; so we turned and rejoined the admiral at Ledsund.

We had returned in time to accompany the admiral to witness the final blowing up and destruction of the Bomarsund Forts by the French. The smaller forts were burning furiously, but the larger one was still intact. The French general carried supreme authority, and by his orders it was mined in several places and the casemates crammed with fire-wood. In the evening all was fired, and thousands witnessed the magnificent sight as the mines successively exploded. They acted with curious differences—some sending

masses of stone and burning wood with volcanic force into the air; others levelling and flinging into the sea great masses of the granite face; whilst the thousands of shell in the magazines added to the splendour of the flame and uproar as they burst. The darkness grew deeper; there was one heart-shaking blaze, and that was the last of Bomarsund.

Let me add that when Sir C. Napier's official despatches went in reporting its capture and the operations which led to this result, Captain Sulivan's name was not even mentioned—the man of whom it may be said that he accomplished the whole, not only by his skill as a surveyor, but by the advice which Napier followed yet did not acknowledge. The pity of it is that our Navy is crowded with similar instances. Commander Cochrane for his services as A.D.C. to the French general was promoted, but retained command until the *Driver* was ordered home. All was hurry now to re-embark the French. Their losses in action were almost nil, but a more sinister foe had stricken them. On those healthy breeze-swept islands, where disease was almost unknown, immediately the French landed cholera broke out, and small wonder, for their sanitary arrangements and latrines were primitive beyond belief, and their personal cleanliness left much to be desired. Of the 600 landed at Presto 100 died, and out of 10,000 soldiers no less than 800 were lost in three weeks after the fort fell—a heavy price to pay for the glory of taking Bomarsund.

The French ships and troops having left for France, our fleet sailed for Revel, arriving on September 22, and on the following day the Commander-in-Chief, with Admiral Chads, General Jones, and other big-wigs,

came on board the *Driver*, and Captain Sulivan took charge as pilot to make a close reconnaissance of Sweaborg and Helsingfors. He knew the ground perfectly, and had before taken us in. We steamed across from Revel, with the splendid 50-gun frigate *Impérieuse* on one quarter, and the *Basilisk* (to be known to me in after-years) on the other—their orders being to keep close and embark the Commander-in-Chief in case of accident, whilst we kept a boat ready at a moment's notice, for the old admiral was in a state of nervousness, repeating again and again: "I dinna want to visit St. Petersburg."

As we neared the narrow Sweaborg Channel our consorts had to wait two miles outside. Slowly we approached, and were getting within range, for the forts had dropped some shot not far off. General Jones was studying the Russian chart of the place, spread out on the capstan, and I was pointing out to him the small island round which we should turn, the admiral being on the bridge with Captain Sulivan. Suddenly we heard him shouting: "Hard a starboard, Captain Cochrane! Hard a starboard, I tell ye!"

"What's up?" said the general in natural amazement. "It means the admiral won't go any farther!" I replied. The general rushed on to the bridge and joined his persuasions to those of the two captains, pointing out that a close view of the place ought to be obtained, and that it was indeed an absolute necessity, Captain Sulivan following with the explanation that he knew the safe channel round the island, but that if he turned short of it there were dangerous rocks to be dreaded, and therefore much risk. All was no use. Our chief had a forced journey to St. Petersburg

on the brain. He made but one reply: "Hard a starboard! Hard a starboard, I tell ye!"

His orders were necessarily obeyed, with the result that we found ourselves among a nest of rocks and in shallow water. There was real cause for anxiety then. Rocks were on all sides, and there was no room to turn save by pivoting on our own length. If the Russians had shown the least enterprise, we should probably have been sunk or captured; but we were unmolested, and with splendid skill Captain Sulivan manœuvred the ship round in her own length, and we steamed off to our consorts, our chief having seen as much of Sweaborg as he had previously done of Cronstadt.

The fact is he was broken both in body and mind, and his difficulties were many, for he was not only attacked by the Press for not performing impossibilities, but the Admiralty left him unsupported, and many of his captains held aloof from him.

Thus ended the Baltic Campaign of 1854, before the Northern winter closed in and the ice shut the Russian ships into their ports. Ours were withdrawn gradually, but the last of the crews were able to eat their Christmas dinners at home.

CHAPTER XVI

BALTIC, 1855

"Pleasantly rose next morning the sun on the village of Grand Pré—
Pleasantly gleamed on the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships with their wavering shadows were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labour
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.

* * * * *

And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the harbour,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins."

LONGFELLOW.

THE programme for the Baltic Campaign of 1855 promised opportunities for active service that would wholly eclipse those of the previous year, as they very easily might. A serious attempt would be made to capture Cronstadt. A French *corps d'armée* co-operating with the Allied fleets, which consisted wholly of steamships, were to be aided by the English and French floating batteries and a numerous fleet of heavily armed gunboats and mortar vessels.

It was evident there would be little opening for paddlers. I therefore fell back on my old trade, and was appointed gunnery lieutenant of a 60-gun block-ship—*i.e.*, an old line-of-battle ship razeed, and fitted with high-pressure locomotive engines of 200 horse-power, and especially intended to engage shore batteries. My friend Goodenough was gunnery lieutenant of a sister ship.

The old admirals of the 1854 fleet were eliminated, and the chief command given to Real-Admiral Richard S. Dundas, C.B., the youngest officer of his rank in the service, who, by the aid of overpowering interest, had in peace-time been promoted to post rank at the early age of twenty-two. He was essentially a safe man, but excited no personal enthusiasm.

With these hopes the ships were commissioned in the beginning of the year, but before the advanced squadron left for the Baltic, at the end of March, all prospect of their fulfilment vanished. The French *corps d'armée* and the floating batteries were sent to the Black Sea.

Thus deprived of any landing force, and the Russian fleet shut up in their ports hopelessly outnumbered, nothing remained for Admiral Dundas but the inglorious tactics of 1854.

The Allied fleets consisted of twenty-one sail-of-the-line, thirty frigates and sloops, and as many heavily armed gunboats and mortar vessels. Again the almost wholly defenceless Russian coasts were harried, Cronstadt reconnoitred, and finally, as a last useless act before the short Baltic summer closed, Sweaborg was bombarded at a safe range of 3,500 yards. One thousand tons of projectiles were hurled into the fortress, no doubt to the infinite discomfort of the Russians and the blowing up of some powder magazines, but without the smallest practical value as regards the issue of the war.

In this display of naval power our ship had no share. At the end of July she had been detached as senior officer to the Gulf of Riga. The southern entrance to this gulf is marked by Domness Point, off which a sand-pit extends for about three miles, affording under its lee a safe anchorage at all times.

On the rising hills, bordered by a sandy beach fronting the anchorage, lay a peaceful Livonian village, with prettily painted wooden cottages, where the Lutheran pastor's house was prominent, nestling near the picturesque high-steepled wooden church, the whole forming, with fishing-boats on the beach and the cottage gardens, as fair a prospect of rural quiet as the eye could well desire.

Off this village of Domness our ships had anchored during the war, bartering with the people for fish, eggs, milk, etc., but not landing, as a small police force of Cossacks was stationed in the village. Here we also anchored, and spent two or three quiet days, afterwards paying a visit to the little island of Huno, some thirty miles from Domness, where, there being no Cossacks, we held friendly intercourse with its simple inhabitants.

Returning to Domness, our captain considered it his duty to expel the Cossack police from the village, and if resistance were offered, to punish the inhabitants.

The force at his command was overwhelming, for, besides our ship, a screw sloop was co-operating. A landing party of 200 seamen and marines was prepared, but the only possible resistance could be from the fifteen or twenty Cossack police.

The villagers and fishermen on the beach cleaning and drying their winter supply of fish were as ignorant of their approaching fate as those of Grand Pré. They suspected and feared no evil from the friendly ships, to whose presence they had so long been accustomed. However, the boats, under the command of the captain and first lieutenant, were manned and armed, I being left in temporary command of the ship, with orders "to open fire on the village, covering the boats, but

to spare the church." Then, under a hail of shot from some forty heavy guns, which virtually destroyed the village, our boats raced for the beach. The Cossacks from the brow of a hill fired a harmless volley and fled, followed by all the villagers, excepting the sick and infirm. "One piece of ordnance was captured!" It had long done duty as a lamp-post, and was guiltless of carriage or vent-hole. These were provided for it on board.

I had endeavoured to obey my orders and "spare the church," but as I could not personally lay the guns, and the tall steeple formed the most prominent mark, it was badly knocked about. What became of the villagers we never learnt, and I have no doubt the knowledge would have been sufficiently painful.

We had one man wounded, shot through the shoulder by one of his shipmates when landing. Such were our casualties, and such was the victory of Domness.

On another occasion there was not the same disparity of force, but I should be hard put to it to defend the usefulness of the action.

In company with the *Desperate*, a screw corvette, we reconnoitred the city of Riga, at the mouth of the River Dwina. It was protected by strong forts, with shoal water in their front, precluding a nearer approach than 2,500 yards; in addition, a flotilla of gunboats came from the river, and, under the protection of the shoals, were safe from our attack. As a matter of fact, Riga would have been a hard nut for the whole fleet to crack.

In these circumstances our wisdom would have been to keep out of range, for at so great a distance we could not possibly inflict any injury on the forts, and the chances of hitting a little gunboat were infini-

tesimal. But the desire to burn gunpowder was too strong to be resisted; therefore we stood along the edge of the shoals and engaged the forts and gunboats.

The Russians fired remarkably well. The *Desperate* was struck two or three times, her rudder disabled, and a shell bursting near her wheel, shattered it, and killed and wounded several men. We had only one man mortally wounded. I happened to see the shot coming, its force spent, like a falling cricket-ball, and as I jumped out of its way it struck the man immediately behind me. We then hauled off.

The next day we were foolish enough to repeat the operation, but kept out of range; whilst, by giving our guns extreme elevation and listing the ship, we managed to make the Russians a present of some 300 shot, which fell harmlessly on the beach. This finished the Riga actions.

The day following I was sent in charge of our boats to cut off a lot of coasting vessels creeping along the shore. They were defended by a considerable body of Cossacks on the beach, but these were easily driven off out of rifle-range by our boats' guns, and the unfortunate coasters became our prizes without any loss to ourselves.

This kind of work went on for several days, dozens of these small craft of 15 or 20 tons being captured, to the ruin of the poor owners.

Legally it was our right to sink, burn, and destroy them, but the action rendered no manner of advantage to our arms; nor did it even serve in the matter of prize-money, for they were worthless, and were destroyed.

Some six weeks later we received our orders for England, when we took part in a great naval review at Spithead by the King of Sardinia.

CHAPTER XVII

FLAG-LIEUTENANT

" More queenly, wearing sorrow's dreary crown,
And robed in bitter wrongs, than when she moved
In youthful beauty, and the diadem
Paled in more golden hair."

ALEXANDER SMITH.

THE Baltic Campaign had opened with bright hopes of distinction and promotion, which ended in disappointment when peace with Russia was proclaimed, and the Black Sea unluckily monopolized naval promotions. My good fortune was therefore great when I was chosen by Admiral Chads to be his flag-lieutenant during his command on the Irish Station, with his flag flying at Queenstown, for this was a promotion billet, leading straight to commander's rank, without any reference to claims or merit. No doubt it was a wrong system, and it was soon to cease.

Few are left to whom the name of my distinguished chief will recall a passing thought, but the student of naval history will remember him as the first lieutenant and (when his captain was mortally wounded) commander of the *Java* in her unequal fight with the American frigate *Constitution*.

A few months later my father, as a Knight of the Austrian Order of Maria Theresa, received an invitation from the then young Emperor of Austria to attend the centenary of the Order, as representative of the

English Navy, with Field-Marshal Lord Seaton representing the Army. Sir Henry Chads gave me leave to accompany my father as his A.D.C. Arriving at Vienna, we were lodged at the Duke Charles Hotel. The next day Marshal Count Nugent, my father's old companion in arms in the operations against the French and the taking of Trieste in 1814, came to visit him, and very delightful it was to see the warm affection between the two old warriors, both so hale and hearty. He was followed by the Imperial Chancellor, Count Buist, who with our own Minister arranged details of a reception by the Emperor. This took place on the following day, when we were received in the most gracious, informal way, and were warmly welcomed to Vienna and to all the events prepared in honour of the centenary.

Not the least attractive of these was a reception of the Knights of the Order by the beautiful young Empress. For this purpose the Imperial carriages took us to Schönbrunn, where we were presented. I have never forgotten the romantic beauty of the gardens of Schönbrunn—the masses of splendid colour against the varied background of the trees, the gleam of statues, and the hidden music that filled the air—whilst behind it all lay an ironic sense of the evanescence of human greatness in the memory that but fifty years before the alien Napoleon had issued his edicts from this very place. Not Napoleon, however, but the Empress's romantic marriage, was now on every tongue.

Three years before this date the Emperor's bride had been virtually chosen—the eldest daughter of a most unhappy family, that of the Grand Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, and thither he proceeded to meet

the Princess. At dinner he was to sit beside her—or so the parents proposed; but they had not counted on their younger daughter, Elizabeth, a girl of sixteen, whose appearance during the festivities had been strictly forbidden. As the Emperor was ascending the grand staircase a door opened and she stood before him. From that moment his fate was sealed. She, and not her sister, sat by his side at the banquet, and one of the loveliest women in Europe was thus destined for a throne, and a life pre-eminent in tragedy as in rank. A few months afterwards she became Empress of Austria, and my recollection of her in the few early days of her happiness are clouded by the tragic circumstances of her family history and her own melancholy existence, ended by the knife of the assassin at Geneva.

From the gardens she led us to the palace—gorgeous indeed with crystal, and malachite, and lapis lazuli. But who has seen one has seen all, and such splendours are *banal* and fatiguing to the mind in description. On June 18 we attended a display at the Imperial Opera House, representing the principal events of Marshal Daun's great victory over Frederick the Great, when the Empress Maria Theresa instituted the famous Order which bears her name.

This was followed by a review, including (what had not then reached England) a musical ride. But possibly the most interesting function was the High Mass held for the Knights of the Order—a splendid ceremony, with the young Emperor attended by all his court, and with the Knights ranged at his right hand. I remember well the striking effect of the salvo fired by the assembled army on the elevation of the Host—a remarkable and theatrical display. Then

followed the banquets and rejoicings, where Esterhazy's priceless Tokay flowed like water.

On June 22 the festivities ended. My father presented his A.D.C. with a diamond ring as a memento of an interesting stay, and the railway took us to the foot of the Semmering Pass, which we crossed in a primitive calash, drawn by three horses, lashed to the pole by ropes.

No more pastoral and beautiful country can be found anywhere than among these Styrian Alps. They never rise beyond the height to which the pine can climb, and the forests and fertile valleys are exquisite after the solitudes of higher ranges. Small lakes and rushing streams abound, and the cows stand udder-deep in the flowery grass. Everything adds to the charm: the women in their white caps and scarlet skirts, the sturdy flaxen-haired children, and the lovely atmosphere of serenity and household peace combine into a whole which makes the country so dear to its sons that military recruits must be sent home for a short spell after the first year's service, lest they should sicken of the deadly nostalgia that saps all their energies and reduces them to a listless despair. For the moment I really felt that I could understand them.

Arriving at Trieste, my father saw still sticking in the wall the very shot which he had fired from the battery he had constructed forty-four long years before.

In July I resumed my duties as flag-lieutenant at Queenstown. From 1856 to 1859 life was not especially interesting there, but it afforded one instance of the weakness of human nature which I still think laughable.

The little island of Haulbowline in the harbour was the official home of Dr. Brown, the surgeon in charge of the naval hospital; Mr. Jones, the naval store-keeper;

and Mr. Robinson, the master-attendant. It so happened that Robinson and Jones were relatives, both excellent fellows, driven apart only by the fact that from their island home before the days of steam launches egress was difficult and constant companionship a necessity. Also, there was one small grass-plot, on which the Jones cow was pastured. Now, Robinson, a later comer, but senior in rank, demanded this plot for the Robinson cow, and his claim being refused, a coolness ensued, though the outward semblance of neighbourly feeling was maintained.

Jones, stiff, correct, and pretentious, never lost his temper. Robinson did frequently, and was much comforted and abetted therein by Dr. Brown, a fiery Celt whose friends were all angels and their opponents the reverse. And thus matters stood when the screw line-of-battle ship *Agamemnon* arrived, having on board the first Atlantic electric cable. It could be little foreseen that this cable, the link of peace between two great nations, was destined first to embroil the island of Haulbowline in internecine war, yet so it proved. Great was the interest excited and keen the desire to possess the little two-inch specimens which could be had on board the *Agamemnon*, and this innocent circumstance was the cause of all the mischief that followed.

The commander of the *Agamemnon* was a personal friend of Robinson's, so to him Jones applied for a letter of introduction. Robinson wrote as follows:

"DEAR WHITE,

"That fellow Jones has asked for an introduction to you to see the cable. I have given it, but I hate the fellow!"

This graceful introduction Jones took in the fullest confidence and presented it to the commander, who on his part received him politely, exhibiting the electric cable and showing him one of the pretty little brass-bound specimens, worth, perhaps, half a crown.

Jones thought his civility had culminated in a gift. He put the specimen in his pocket, went on shore, and handed it to his wife to put on the family chimney-piece.

Meanwhile, the commander took stock of his specimens, and missed one. He immediately sat down and wrote to his friend:

"DEAR ROBINSON,

"I showed Jones all over the ship, and I have missed one of my specimens. I believe the fellow has walked off with it."

Having thus written in light-hearted fashion, he went off to Jones's house and asked if he had seen such a thing, reminding him of the circumstance.

"Oh yes," said Jones, "I have the one you gave me," pointing to it. An explanation followed, and it was restored.

Next day a circumstantial report was everywhere that Jones had stolen an *Agamemnon* specimen; that the commander had gone to his house, taken him by the arm, and said, "Give up the specimen that you stole"; that Jones had turned as white as his shirt, and had restored it with entreaties for mercy. This spread like wildfire, and as a rule was believed.

I and another personal friend of Jones thought our best course would be to see him and impart the rumour, which certainly required contradiction, and with anxious hearts we sought an interview. It was the first he had heard of the precious story, and it

became clear in the course of his later inquiries that Brown and Robinson were its principal promulgators. To them, therefore, he wrote, demanding immediate withdrawal and apology. They simply bade him do his worst. He did do it, for nothing less would assuage his fury. An action for libel was entered, and some of the most eminent counsel at the Irish Bar retained—Deasy, Chatterton, Sullivan, and another, all of whom were afterwards on the bench. I shall never forget that array of talent, and the absurdity of the occasion that called it forth! The case was tried before the Chief Baron, and lasted no less than thirteen days. I was summoned as witness on Jones's side, and in common with the whole of Ireland, enjoyed the display of wit and declamation that such an affair was sure to evoke, for the letters were read amid roars of laughter, and the cross-examination of Brown and Robinson deserved remembrance even in the annals of a Bar celebrated for its handling of the comic side of a case.

It was not, perhaps, so amusing for Robinson, who had eventually to pay £150, or for Brown, who was bled to the tune of £40, while their costs amounted to perhaps five or six times as much. But Cork enjoyed itself hugely, and christened Haulbowline "Cable Island," and hailed with delight the cruel fate that condemned all three belligerents still to live in such narrow bounds, and to break their cutting silence when they were obliged to meet in official relationship.

Whilst thinking of this time I recall my Irish servant Mick, who, although loyal and communicative to me, was necessarily "agin the Government."

He could point out the place where the brilliant and splendid French army would land for the redemption of an oppressed Ireland, with the route of the march to

Cork, and the subsequent victory, "till the English would be leggin' it into the sea like hares, glory be to God! and the country would be as bare of them from Cape Clear to Malin Head as the palm of yer honour's hand."

I used to ask the sources of his certainty, but he would never say any more than:

"There's them that knows—them that has *the sight*," with a shifty look in his own pale eyes. And, indeed, I suppose at that time their old men did see visions and their young men dream dreams. He was the mildest of little men, and in his gentle Munster drawl would say:

"I'd like to wade up to me knees in Protestant blood—so I would. Sure the blessin' of God would be on that same. And you couldn't bate the power of the priest. Look at Father Danger, what he done to Pat Conolly!"

I knew Father Danger, who had won his nickname by his habit of carrying a heavy whip for the pastoral purpose of clearing his flock out of the shebeen houses and into the chapel, and I respected his prowess. I also knew Pat Conolly, with his white, sightless eye.

"What did he do?" said I.

Mick settled down with gusto to the recital.

"What he done? 'Twas when the hunger [the great famine] was in it, and Pat—the devil roast him and baste him for that same!—was a souper, no less! God be good to us!"

Now, a souper is one who leaves the true Church for the sake of the soup supposed to be provided to converts by the Church which in Ireland is not considered the true one.

"I wouldn't say but he had the hunger, but if he had itself, what's yer stomach to yer soul? Well, be this and be that, Father Danger heard what he done, and the dear knows he didn't lose two minutes walkin' round to me bowld boy. And he didn't say much—so he didn't, but he cursed him for all, and the two eyes of him; and the one wint out that minnit, like a candle when you'd be blowin' it, and the other would be after it in two twoes, only, b'lieve me, Pat was down on his knees promising God that if he'd lave him that he'd have done with his gallivantin'."

"So that was how he got his blind eye?" said I.

"That was the very way, by the blessin' of Heaven!" said Mike piously. "Sure it's Father Danger is the grand man for cursin', and a person would be the better in his health for hearin' him while he'd live."

Mike was particularly great at wakes. I had the curiosity once to jot down the list of the necessaries indispensable to jollity at one that was done in really good style, according to his views.

"We had," he said, "ten gallons of whisky, thirty-five shillings' worth of tobacco, thirty-six pounds of sugar, two big baskets of pipes, and six pounds' worth of snuff; and after 'twas over and the corpse waked, faith! the boys cracked their shillelaghs battlin' it out before the polis came up."

I did not believe in the snuff, but I did in the whisky, then two shillings a gallon, but now three shillings a bottle, and one of the hardest tyrannies poor Ireland endures from the hated "Saxoneen."

I spent the last few months of my flag-lieutenancy in a delightful cruise, Sir H. Chads being placed in command of a small squadron for the purpose of escorting the Princess Stéphanie (one of the Hohenzollerns,

and bride-elect of Don Pedro V. of Portugal) to Lisbon, from a visit to the Queen at Windsor. We awaited her arrival at Plymouth, and she came and won the hearts of all that met her—beautiful and intellectual-looking, still in her teens, and royal, as I thought, by nature.

I wondered what her sensations, hidden under a manner of perfect grace, were when she beheld her consort, an ungainly-looking lad of twenty-two, for the first time on our arrival at Lisbon. But these were unsolved mysteries. The marriage took place the day after she landed at Lisbon, but it was a short-lived union, for she died the following year and the young King two years later.

Lady Paget, in some interesting reminiscences in the *Nineteenth Century* of January, 1909, alludes thus to the Princess Stéphanie: "The Princess of Prussia was very fond of the lovely young girl, and had her constantly to stay with her. There was something angelic in the childlike contour and expression of her face. She had been brought up in Spartan simplicity; nevertheless, she made a beautiful young queen, when she stood arrayed in royal robes, and covered with splendid jewels sent by her future husband. Her death was a tragedy which saddened the hearts of all who knew her."

On December 9, 1858, Sir H. Chads struck his flag, and I had the good luck to find myself a commander at twenty-eight years of age.

CHAPTER XVIII

H.M.S. "SNAKE"

"Which I wish to remark,
And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar,
Which same I would rise to explain."

BRET HARTE.

WHEN I became a commander the Admiralty notion for securing the efficiency of newly promoted officers was to keep them on half-pay and in enforced idleness to the limit which would probably force them to retire under the non-employment clause. Thus for three years I was cut off from my profession (excepting, indeed, that as an amateur I had one cruise with the Channel Fleet), a fact which needs little comment at the present time. However, at last, on December 8, 1861, I received my appointment to command H.M.S. *Snake* on the China Station, *vice* Commander Harvey, invalided. The *Snake* was as lovely a little craft as ever floated. She was of 500 tons, 180 horse-power, and was barque-rigged. Indeed, she could steam and sail with anything afloat in those days, and I must not forget her armament of two long 68-pounder pivot guns (then the heaviest guns in the service) and two brass 12-pound howitzers on her broadside. She carried a crew of ninety men, and, taken as a whole, what more could any young officer ask for his first command?

On December 20 I left Southampton in the P. and O. *Indus* for Alexandria. When we left England the arrest of the Confederate envoys on board the *Trent* had just set the civilised world in an uproar. Troops were despatched to Canada, and our North American Fleet was largely reinforced. It thus came about that our Consul-General at Alexandria (Colquhoun) had received orders from England to detain me, pending further information, while the other passengers went on to Suez, where the P. and O. steamer was delayed until my arrival. After a five days' wait despatches from the Government arrived, giving precise instructions to the Governors of Aden, Ceylon, Singapore, and Hong Kong—all the great satraps, in fact, of our far-flung line of Eastern Empire—concerning the steps they were to take in case of war with America. These despatches were to be kept most secret, and I was to deliver them along the chain of stations *en route* to Hong Kong. Greatness being thus thrust upon me, I became immediately a personage. A special train was placed at my service, and special cabins in the mail steamers, whose captains were charged to attend to my wishes.

At Cairo a large concourse of English residents assembled, all eager to see me, devoured with curiosity, and imploring for news which it was not in my power to give. That true hero Sir James Outram sent his A.D.C. with a note requesting information, but even to him my lips were sealed. At Suez the P. and O. steamer *Simla* was waiting, and I blessed my despatches as I took possession of an airy cabin, secluded and comparatively cool, in which to face the furnace heat of the Red Sea.

The male passengers soon found there was nothing to be got out of me, and with masculine philosophy

sheered off. Not so the women, and I derived exquisite amusement from the delicate little arts and finesse employed to extract my secret with the least possible inconvenience to myself. I remember a charming Miss Seward (niece of the American Secretary of State, then conducting the *Trent* negotiations), as clever and attractive a Yankee girl as ever tried to twist a poor Englishman round her finger. We were both chess-players, and over many a game her innocent chatter led again and again to the point of interest. "Did I think——? How terrible it would be if——" and so forth; while others of the American girls on board were equally acute and investigatory. But the Mother Country held its own. St. Anthony triumphed, and so did I.

At Point de Galle most of my fair inquisitors left in the Calcutta steamer, a divided and angry band; for the voyage from Suez had been marked by a quarrel of the bitterest between the fast set and the slow set, with, needless to say, a woman as the storm centre. It was referred eventually to the Commander-in-Chief in India, and I believe the whole unseemly absurdity would never have arisen but for the then P. and O. custom of supplying free of charge champagne and other wines and spirits—a method pleasant enough for the passengers, but with obvious drawbacks.

The P. and O. never hurried in those days. Their contract speed was eight knots; they had no competitors. England ruled the roost in the East, and could take her own time, and, except to an unusually far-sighted mind, there seemed no reason to suppose that she would not rule it for ever.

So at Singapore we were transferred to the *Orissa*, an old tub incapable of steaming against the monsoon;

indeed, she had to keep off her course to let her own fore and aft sails draw; and thus we crawled along, arriving at Hong Kong on the thirteenth day from Singapore, and the fifty-seventh from home. As there was no telegraphic communication beyond Suez with England, my arrival created the utmost excitement, especially amongst the Americans. At that time the *Alabama* was cruising in the China Seas, and more than twenty first-class clipper ships had taken refuge in Hong Kong. Had war been declared, they would have become our prizes, and I should have found myself a rich man at one stroke. Happily, it was not so to be. The following mail brought the news that the Federal envoys had been given up, and my commander's pay of £300 a year remained at the same figure. At Hong Kong I was destined to cool my heels for seven weeks. The *Snake* was at Shanghai, and I ought to have taken command at once; but the acting commander had distinguished himself in the battle with the Taku forts, and therefore the Commander-in-Chief decided to keep him on, in hopes of giving him another opportunity. And thus a job was perpetrated, and I was appointed acting commander of the *Sphinx*, then cruising among the South Sea Islands, and unable to return to Hong Kong for months. It was cruel hard lines for me, and I wrote an unavailing remonstrance; therefore I could not altogether deplore the fact when circumstances—sad for the poor fellow in command—frustrated the admiral's intention. The *Snake* had been ordered to cross the Gulf of Pechili to Talienwan. She left Chifu and steered straight for the Encounter Rock, which lies mid-channel. Her commander had left orders to be called when within six miles, but the ship overran

the distance, the night was dark, and the first intimation of danger came from the rock itself. By splendid seamanship she was got off and brought to Shanghai, where I joined immediately. I found my little ship all but a wreck, but this was a blessing (though pretty well disguised), for it left the crew available for operations on shore. The Taiping Rebellion was then at a very doubtful issue. The American general, Ward (with very partial success), commanded the Chinese Imperial troops, for Chinese Gordon and his Ever-Victorious army had not as yet made their appearance, and the Taipings were closely surrounding Shanghai. General Staveley, with a considerable body of troops and a co-operating French force, was available, and these were backed up by a naval brigade under the personal command of Sir James Hope, the Commander-in-Chief, who determined to clear the Taipings out of a radius of thirty miles round Shanghai. And the day after I took command an extensive expedition started, the admiral, in command of the English, advancing to the north-west of Shanghai, whilst I commanded a body of Imperial troops, supplemented by the *Snake's* sixteen marines as a body-guard, on the south side of the Woo-Sung River.

Before noon, therefore, to my own considerable surprise, I found myself on a pony, rigged up with a Chinese forked saddle and stirrups, and inspecting about 120 pig-tailed Chinamen in petticoats, armed with old muskets and pantomime spears, a minor Mandarin, who had mastered a little pidgin-English, acting as my second in command. I confess that my eye fell with the only satisfaction I could feel on my sixteen marines and their fine sergeant. Our base was a joss-house, and here we deposited our pro-

visions and ate an uncertain midday meal, stared at by hideous Chinese deities, painted, gilt, and wooden-eyed.

Forming my yellow troops in one line, I drew up the marines in their rear, with strict orders to shoot anyone who turned tail before I did. The Mandarin transmitted this command to his countrymen, but on no impenetrable face and in no oblique eye could I discover the faintest sign of interest or alarm. Then we proceeded on our way. It was an unprepossessing plain, mounded with graves in every direction—unpleasant graves, disclosing half-rotted coffins and human remains. Behind these mounds it was the way of the Taipings to lurk. Just after we had bivouacked for the night, the American Ward notified the admiral that he had found a rebel camp, and, against the advice of the flag-captain and others, Sir James Hope decided on attacking with a small force, he himself taking a most exposed position on the top of a causeway.

The attack failed, the admiral was shot in the leg, the assistant-surgeon of the *Snake* got a nasty wound, and one man was killed. However, the Taipings obligingly fled next day, and, the radius being cleared, the naval force returned to the ships. I was immediately ordered to get the *Snake* ready for sea, and on reporting myself to the admiral, found him prostrated with his wounded leg. A man of noble presence and singularly handsome, he suggested the idea of a Bayard or some other "veray gentil parfait knight," stepped straight from the Chronicles of Froissart into the nineteenth century.

On April 14 we proceeded to Hong Kong, our work being the suppression of piracy.

As I walked the bridge in all the pride and anxiety of a first command, I realised how much would de-

pend upon my officers. There was little difficulty in counting them up. The only lieutenant was Henry Streeten, a young fellow of twenty-three, somewhat ponderous in all his ways and slow of speech, but ready and prompt when duty was concerned, modest, and absolutely to be depended upon. I had already learnt to esteem him, as all his shipmates had long done. He wore the silver medal of the Humane Society for saving life. My next senior officer was W. Jefferies, the gunner—a sound, practical seaman, proud of his guns, which were petted and polished till they shone like silver. The crew were as zealous, and it was pretty to see how lightly they would swing the huge things from broadside to broadside. My last executive officer was a young master's assistant, seventeen years of age, a ne'er-do-weel, but who had to be employed as a watch-keeper. The work of navigation devolved on myself, yet, with practically no one but Streeten to depend upon, I was more than satisfied. The non-executives were as few: an assistant-surgeon, a clerk, and two engineers; but the ship's company under the first lieutenant's training were as able and steady a lot as heart could wish.

Hong Kong in the early sixties virtually consisted of four or five great mercantile houses—Jardine, Dent, and Gibbs Livingstone being the principal. They were all immensely wealthy people and profusely hospitable, and I was fortunate in having a connection, a fine young fellow, more sailor than merchant, in the house of Gibb Livingstone, for with him I found a home whenever I could take a spell on shore; and I believe he enjoyed a dinner in my dog-hole of a cabin, where only four could squeeze round a small table and with the thermometer at 85° F., better than all the sumptuous repasts

of Hong Kong. He owned a yacht, all wings and very little hull, which not unfrequently came near sending him to Davy Jones's locker; but happily he still survives—Robert Lambert, a retired commander of the Naval Reserve, a not very solemn J.P., and as good a fellow as ever lived.

The one engrossing sport in Hong Kong was horse-racing, the big houses contending for the Hong Kong Cup with the zest and expenditure of the Derby. Dent's had just spent £10,000 on a celebrated horse, and brought him out to win the Cup; but the voyage ruined him, and he never ran a yard. Nevertheless, there was splendid competition, and every morning at seven, before the heat was torrid, the rank and fashion of the place were on their way to the Happy Valley to see the horses exercised. On one of these mornings I was riding a handsome little Arab, when a pony-trap containing Blank, of the 99th Regiment, and driven by a clerk in the Attorney-General's office, came flying up on the wrong side; his shaft struck my horse on the shoulder and flung him down, the wheels going over his legs and knocking them about cruelly.

Naturally, my horse being a borrowed one, I asked Blank for compensation. He denied liability, and referred me to the owner of the trap, whose son was driving. All offers of friendly arbitration failed, and the case came on before the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General appearing for the owner. He was an extremely short man, choleric and impetuous, and the case was such a hopeless one that, but for his clerk being implicated, he probably would never have touched it. But, from these two circumstances, it followed that my cross-examination was severe, and that interest in the trial waxed until the court was crowded.

The road where the accident took place was fully forty feet wide, and this was generally known, but the Attorney-General's object was to narrow it as much as possible. He therefore asked:

"Will you swear the road was thirty feet wide?"

"No, I won't swear it," I replied.

"Will you swear it was twenty?"

"No."

"Fifteen, ten."

And thus we descended to the question, "Was it five feet wide?"—very snappishly and importantly delivered.

I reflected, looked at my tormentor, and said:

"Well, taking your height at five feet—yes, I will swear it was over that width."

It was not right, I know, but flesh and blood could not stand him. There was a burst of laughter, and the little man appealed to the Judge, only to get the cold comfort of—

"Really, Mr. Attorney-General, I think you brought it on yourself."

I won the case, with £60 damages.

At this time the Chinese in Hong Kong numbered about 100,000, and it was believed that fully one-half were criminals, who, finding their own country too hot for them, were good enough to patronise our flag. Amongst these, pirates, or pilongs, were abundant. Every piratical gang on the coast had its Hong Kong confederates, whilst in the harbour and among the surrounding islets pirates swarmed in the disguise of fishermen or traders. So that, despite naval vigilance, many a cruel pillage and massacre took place in Hong Kong waters, and such an instance had just occurred. Stately men-of-war, with attendant gunboats, were in

the harbour, when a junk freighted by Chinese with about 2,000 pounds' worth of opium prepared to sail. No one noticed that some hours before an innocent-looking fishing-boat left and began fishing in the Limoon Pass, six or seven miles out, for this was a common enough occurrence; but as the unsuspecting opium junk passed her, a turn of her powerful stern scull put the pretended fishing-boat alongside, and in a few moments the capture was complete, and the passengers and crew murdered and flung overboard. Two only escaped, a boy of seven, whose life was spared, and one of the crew, who managed to swim some miles to the Hong Kong mainland, where he told his ghastly tale.

A gunboat was sent immediately, and found a few floating spars; but the pilong had disappeared, and was probably at anchor off one of the Hong Kong wharves.

Yet justice, if slow-footed, was sure. Two months afterwards the man who was saved met in the streets the child whom he had believed to be dead. This led to the discovery of all the murderers, and they were duly hanged.

News followed hard on this that the American ship *Phantom* had been shipwrecked on the Patrass shoal and attacked and pillaged, the crew escaping in their boats, of which two were still missing; and the *Snake* was immediately sent in search, the mate of the *Phantom* (as rough an old sea-dog as ever I met) accompanying us. The following day, whilst examining every bay and inlet, the glass fell for a typhoon, and for some hours, running for an anchorage, we were exposed to the transcendent fury of the gale, and during this storm there occurred a strange episode.

I was on the bridge, which was swept by the crests of the waves, half blinded and dazzled in the livid light

of frenzied wind and water. The flying foam had just hissed over us. I glanced down, and there, lying at my feet, was the body of a baby girl, looking as if tranquilly asleep amidst the shrieking of the typhoon. Only for a moment. Another wave hissed by, and the little corpse was swept away again into "its vast and wandering grave"—a strange and touching sight. Next day we found one of the missing boat's crew, and proceeded to Han Ting, a small fortified town, in search of the other.

On the banks of the river we saw a suspicious-looking junk at anchor, but between us was such a dangerous surf on the bar that only our whale-boat and gig, with myself, the gunner, and ten men, could cross it. As we scrambled up one side of the junk her crew scuttled down the other, and our search revealed, as I had suspected, a quantity of the wrecked American's gear, lying snugly concealed on board. A visit to the local Mandarin was clearly indicated, in spite of a crowd of furious gesticulating men on the river-bank. Their bludgeons were of little moment as compared with our fixed bayonets, so we charged into the midst of them, and in a moment they were off, pigtails flying in all directions, and our way clear before us. One man was captured by my direction, and securely anchored by his pigtail, while I questioned him. He led us to the Mandarin's house, but that functionary (no doubt for the best of reasons) had found important business elsewhere. We therefore seized the junk, and, hoisting her big rattan sail, returned with her to Hong Kong. The other boat was never found, and until the sea gives up her dead it will not be known whether those American sailors were lost in the typhoon or had their throats cut by the pirates. We received the

thanks of the President of the United States for this service.

Our next cruise was on behalf of a Spanish ship, for in those days every nationality turned to the British Navy for assistance or redress. We were, indeed, the universal sea-police.

In this case the Spaniards could give little help toward identification, and we were obliged to work on the fact that the two pilongs who had attacked them were decorated with three large black patches on their rattan sails—a slender clue, indeed, with which to thread our way amongst the innumerable islets extending from Hong Kong as far west as Hainan.

Island after island we searched; many were the rascally pilongs we encountered, but proof was lacking. Finally, we met a fleet of a hundred junks—a strangely picturesque sight—several of them bearing the three black patches on rattan sails. We boarded all these, but none were pilongs.

At the Grand Ladrone Island, off Macao, we found much evidence of a pilong pillage in a snug little cove, where was a village of at least 1,000 inhabitants. The headman had made off, but he could not take with him a stone house containing a perfect armoury of strange weapons — matchlocks, gingals, spears, and, beside these, casks of sugar piled one on another, whilst, to crown all, there was an artfully concealed battery of ten nine-pounders.

There could be little doubt as to the meaning of all this, but absolute proof of piracy being absent, I had to content myself with a report to my senior officer—a report which elicited no response.

So the Spaniard was unavenged, and yet not wholly so, for running past the entrance to the Canton River we

saw under the land two junks alongside each other. This did not excite our suspicion, for they were lying near the Bogue Forts, where war-junks were always stationed, and we were keeping our course when a passing sampan hailed us with a cry of "Pilong! pilong!" pointing to the junks.

Up went our helm instantly, and under steam and sail we ran in chase. The pilongs as quickly grasped the situation. They sheered off from their prize (the second junk), and, with their huge bamboo-spread sails bellying out to a strong breeze on their quarter, they steered straight for the nearest land, hoping to reach it and make good their escape. She travelled fast, but the *Snake* faster, and in less than an hour, under the persuasion of a few shot, the sails came lurching down, and we boarded her.

No men are more consistent fatalists than the Chinese. They accept kismet in the same spirit as the Turks, and these fellows submitted to be put in irons without a sign of emotion.

We took our prize at once to Canton, where, after I had communicated with our Consul and the Chinese Governor (stipulating that the prisoners should have a fair trial, and that there should be no torture), soldiers were sent and the pirates marched off in chains.

Justice was not leaden-footed on this occasion, for the very next day I was favoured with an invitation to be present at the last scene. I unhesitatingly declined, but one of our officers was sent in my place, and thus described what took place.

On the prisoners' arrival at the execution ground, they were made to kneel in one long row with arms tightly pinioned behind their backs, and the calves of their legs lashed to the thighs.

Next the executioner, with his attendant, and armed with a short, heavy sword, advanced from the rear. The attendant's duty was lightly to push the wretched pilongs on the back, and as each fell forward the sword swept and the head rolled on the ground. In no instance was a second stroke necessary, and in three minutes the whole horrible episode was ended.

Soon after this a solitary junk arrived at Hong Kong, bringing an English sailor, who believed himself to be the sole survivor of the crew of the *Lord of the Isles*, a Scottish barque. She was attacked by three pirates off Hainan, and her crew of twenty men and officers could make no resistance to the horde of ferocious villains when they swarmed on board and began their work of plunder, so he jumped overboard and swam to the rudder chains, where he hung on until he espied a floating spar. To this he clung, and had the amazing good luck of drifting away and being picked up by the honest trader that brought him to Hong Kong.

My orders were to search the whole west coast* —firstly, for the purpose of rescue, if that were possible; and, secondly, with the view of capturing the scoundrels implicated.

It seemed a hopeless task enough—a hundred miles of coastline honeycombed with unsurveyed islets, inlets, and bays, and every town or village more or less in league with the pilongs.

I shall never forget that search. We visited places that I believe no Englishman had ever seen before. We marched our little handful of men through swarming sinister crowds, in festering streets, where the least want of self-confidence would have meant our destruction. We interviewed successive Mandarins in their yamens.

* *I.e.*, the coast-line between Macao and Hainan.

Often the scenes were disgusting, sometimes ludicrous. When visiting the Mandarin of Tien Pach (he with his blue button, robes, and attendants; I with our paymaster, gunner, and a guard of ten marines and a sergeant) tea was offered to us, and accepted as a matter of course. Then, in an excess of politeness, the attendant proceeded with the tea to the guard stiffly drawn up in the courtyard, the men with rifles shouldered. The sergeant looked round distractedly for guidance—he had no precedent for a tea-party on duty. The men stared with cold contempt at the spoonful of acid tea. Fearing lest a refusal might be an affront, I hastily said: "Sergeant, let the men take it." He looked at me for an instant with a long, horrified face of remonstrance, then, stepping to the front as if drilling, he gave the word:

"Order arms! Ground arms! Take the cups! Drink the tea!"

Like Wordsworth's "forty feeding as one," they grasped the cups, and, with a single gesture, emptied them down their throats.

Next came the stately commands:

"Return the cups! Take up arms! Shoulder arms!"

It was done. The sergeant was himself again; he felt he had been equal to the occasion, and I stifled unseasonable laughter in a cough and a handkerchief.

A little later, in a small junk harbour, we received the welcome news that two English boats had obtained supplies and proceeded to Hong Kong, where they arrived safely. It appeared that whilst the plunder was engrossing the pilongs, the officers and crew got away in their boats, and, thus relieved of this anxiety, we turned all our attention to the pirates.

Arriving off St. John's Island (a noted haunt), we

found five large armed junks at the entrance of the bay. Four stood in and anchored in a sheltered position; the other we cut off—a regular pirate, armed with 8 guns and 45 men. These we secured, and fastened our prize alongside, whilst our boats were sent to reconnoitre in Sandy Bay, a spot exactly suited to the flat-bottomed junks, but inaccessible to the *Snake*, drawing 12 feet of water.

There lay the three largest moored, with springs on their cables, their guns commanding the entrance. They mounted 18, 16, and 12 guns respectively, and were fully armed with boarding nettings and stink-pots triced up. The fourth junk lay at a considerable distance from the rest.

Immediately behind the junks a small stream with wooded banks ran into the sea, and on either side sandy hills about 100 feet high commanded the position.

As we noted these things the pilongs opened a smart fire on our boats, and raised shouts of defiance and derision on seeing them retire.

We had three small boats, an eight-oared cutter, and two light gigs, carrying twenty-five men—a hopeless force against such long odds, and unsupported by the *Snake's* guns.

It was a fix, and no mistake, for get the *Snake* into the bay we could not, and the boats were helpless—in fact, the whole business was at a standstill.

It really gave me the joy of a direct inspiration when it suddenly occurred to me that we might convert the captured junk into a gunboat, and thus make our way in. The plan was hailed with delight, and our two brass howitzers were fitted in her to fire from amidships. Coal-bags were supplied to choke them up for firing on the non-recoil system, if necessary; and a



M. F. Moresby.

AN EX-PIRATE JUNK IN ACTION, DEFEATING HER OLD COMRADES.

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very serviceable addition to Her Majesty's fleet she looked when completed.

The next morning the white ensign was hoisted at the stern of Her Majesty's ex-pirate ship—surely the first on record. Our Chinese pilot volunteered as steersman, and a cooler hand under fire I never saw.

Having arranged with Lieutenant Streeten a code of signals, so that our men could, if necessary, be sent to take possession of the heights overlooking the junks, and thus to enfilade their position, I took command of our prize, manned with ten men, and sailed in to the attack.

The novelty of the idea evidently staggered the pilongs. They clearly did not know what to make of an old comrade rejoining them so untowardly, and we were allowed to anchor without molestation.

We came to at point-blank range, just out of reach of their matchlock fire.

Suddenly they grasped the situation, and all three junks began a heavy fire; but we were ready, and gave each a shell in turn—the turn coming pretty often. It was decidedly encouraging to watch the effect of the shell bursting on their crowded decks, and spreading demoralisation with the fragments. Their return fire got very wild, but not before we had been repeatedly hulled, and were making a lot of water. Not only this, but the weight of the howitzers had broken through the deck-beams, and I found we were in a sinking condition, and that it was time to signal for the assistance of the small-arm men.

Matters were getting exciting, and the signal being flown, our fellows landed and ran like hares for the hill-tops above the pirates, whence they sent volley after volley into the pilongs' decks. Just then a lucky shell set the biggest junk on fire, and Lieutenant Streeten, seeing our disabled condition, assumed the

serious responsibility of forcing the *Snake* through the soft, muddy bottom to within range of our long 68-pounders, after which it was all beer and skittles. The other two junks were speedily in flames, and the crews jumped overboard, and swimming ashore, made off inland, whilst their craft burnt to the water's edge and sank.

We managed to keep our victor prize afloat until we got her alongside the *Snake*, and hoisted in the little useful howitzers, and then she too, having served her turn, went to the bottom. The pilongs' shot had pierced her thin sides again and again, as if they were paper, and yet, strangely enough, not one of our men was hit. I was the only sufferer, for, standing rather too much in front of the after howitzer when it was fired, the concussion sent me stumbling overboard. I caught a slack rope and saved myself; but though I suffered great pain in the head, I made no official report, and never knew until I reached England and had it examined that the drum of my left ear was broken.

There was yet another junk to be accounted for, but she was nowhere to be seen. However, next day, when we clambered up a neighbouring hill to reconnoitre, we happened to see an incongruous-looking pile of green branches in the water. Sure enough, there was the junk, hidden snugly underneath the greenery, and quite invisible except from a height.

She shared the fate of her comrades, and the captured pilongs were handed over to the Canton authorities, and dealt with in the usual drastic fashion, whilst we received the approval and congratulations of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir James Hope. Indeed, so far as I know, this is the only instance on record where the pilongs were met and defeated by one of their own junks.

CHAPTER XIX

H.M.S. "SNAKE"—*continued*

"The soul of a party, the life of a feast,
And an illigant song he could sing, I'll go bail;
He would ride with the rector and drink with the priest—
Oh, the broth of a boy was bowld Larry McHale!"

LEVER.

ON returning to Hong Kong we found a very different sort of work awaiting us, and were thereby invited to turn our thoughts from piracy to diplomacy. The transition, however, is possibly not so violent as appears on the surface, and in any case the Navy has not ill-deserved Lord Palmerston's observation that if he had a difficult bit of diplomacy on hand he sent for a naval officer. I was now to prove its pleasures and pains. It came about thus: The wealth and prosperity of Hong Kong rested in a great measure on the opium traffic. Moralists may deplore this, but the fact remains, and if England is charged with forcing the drug upon a resisting people, I can only reply that for six centuries the Chinaman has clung to his opium as the Englishman to his beer. He will have it!

The Nankin Treaty of 1842 was not to reinforce the opium traffic, but to safeguard the rights of our countrymen in an already existing trade.

At this time it had fallen almost entirely into the hands of the great Hong Kong houses, and the competition amongst them was extraordinary. To obtain

the earliest intelligence of ruling prices in these pre-telegraphic days was the aim of each, for this enabled the receiver to buy and sell to enormous advantage, whilst the general public was still in the dark. Every kind of dodge was used. A small quantity of the drug would be sold in one direction to give a false scent, whilst enormous purchases were made in another, or *vice versa*, as the prices rose and fell. Fast steamers brought cargoes to Hong Kong, and thence it was distributed to the seven treaty ports, whence alone it could be legitimately sold to the Chinese authorities. This, at least, was the theory, the fact being that the gains of selling at the non-treaty ports were so enormous, and the Mandarins so accessible to bribery, that a vast system of smuggling was established between corrupt Chinese officials and mercenary English—a system which naturally led to frequent quarrels between the rogues on both sides.

The trade from Hong Kong was carried on by beautiful clipper schooners of some 300 tons, armed with a long 18-pounder swivel gun amidships, and commanded by carefully chosen men. Daring and resource were both needed, for the immensely valuable cargoes had not only to be defended against pirates, but the wily Mandarins remained to be outwitted at each and every opportunity.

The most daring of these opium traders was the Irish skipper of Jardine's schooner *Spray*, an Irishman known all over the Chinese coast as "King Tom," from the unusual circumstance that he claimed descent from the ancient royalty of his country.

We were lazily swinging at anchor in Hong Kong Harbour. The awnings were drawn and life was taking a siesta. The lofty peak of Mount Victoria was

trembling in the hot shimmer of the air, the sea dazzling with its dipping sparkles. Yet a glance to seaward showed a purple line flecked with white foam, for the sea-breeze was rippling in, bringing coolness on its wings, and all awoke to welcome it. As a herald before it came a big schooner flying Jardine's flag, as with mainsail and jib boomed out she almost outran the breeze, coming to anchor near the senior naval officer's ship, instead of off Jardine's Wharf, as usual.

"Something's up, sir. It's the *Spray;* and King Tom is always a rum un," was the first lieutenant's comment, as we saw a boat from the schooner making for the man-of-war; and then he turned to his work and I to mine under the mouth of a big wind-sail in the cabin.

Flags broke out at the senior officer's masthead—my signal to repair on board. Evidently something was up.

In a few minutes I was with my chief, and there on the sofa, a wreck of his former self, lay the Irish skipper of the *Spray.* But the fun was still aglow in his dark eyes—the fun that carries an Irishman through so many tight places, and makes it a certainty that Mark Tapley had some connection, however remote, with the Four Provinces, though Dickens has forgotten to record the fact.

"Will you kindly cast an eye on me, Captain, and see what those Chinese beggars have done for me?" said King Tom. "But I'll be even with them yet, I'm bothered if I'll not."

"It seems more likely to be your job at present, Moresby," said my chief, with a shrug of his shoulders. "But you shall hear the story, and a pretty tangle it is. Give us the particulars again, Captain O'Donovan."

Down I sat, all attention as King Tom's story gradually unfolded itself.

Six months before, it appeared, he had run a cargo of opium to Tam Sui, in Formosa, and there, with the co-operation of the Chinese Governor (the Taotai), had disposed of it at great profit, an entirely illegal proceeding, Tam Sui not being a treaty port, and therefore closed to the opium traffic. If the Taotai (Gow by name) had done right, he would have seized the *Spray* and confiscated her cargo; and his sense of duty might possibly have carried the day but for two unanswerable arguments—firstly, the solid profit to be made; and secondly, the *Spray's* 18-pounder pivot-gun.

Inclination reinforced by the 18-pounder won the battle, and the transaction was completed.

So far so good, and King Tom, like the excellent man of business he was, proceeded to a further deal. He bargained with one Wang Lo for a cargo of camphor to await his return in six months' time; and, calling the Taotai as a witness, he paid the said Wang Lo a deposit of $1,700, and took his departure in perfect charity with all men.

In due time the *Spray* returned, but no camphor was forthcoming, Wang Lo having accepted a better offer in her absence. Worse, however, was behind, for, by an unfortunate lapse of memory, the heathen Chinee was unable to recall any circumstance connected with the deposit money, and insult was added to injury when old Gow (the Taotai), on being appealed to, proved equally oblivious. They bowed, they met King Tom's fury with polished Oriental courtesy, but nothing could (they feared) alter facts. The deposit money had certainly never been paid.

No Irishman could stand this, and least of all King Tom. He simply went frantic, and flung off to the ship, blind with rage that startled even old Gow. In half an hour the *Spray's* gun was trained on the town, and the Taotai was considering the alternatives of seeing Tam Sui blown about his ears or the return of the purchase money.

It appeared to him, however, that there was a third possibility. Commanding the anchorage was a small fort, with, needless to say, neither guns nor ammunition at hand, yet a fort, and capable of armament. Old Gow, considering this, assured King Tom in his courtliest fashion that the deposit money had been traced, and would await him next day at the yamen, and gave private orders to arm the fort.

King Tom should have known his man. He acknowledged this with heart-felt compunction, but verdant as his own native pastures was the innocence that led him straight into the trap.

All night the Chinese worked swiftly and silently at the fort, and though when morning broke there was no change in its outward appearance, it was now distinctly prepared for business.

King Tom, accompanied by his official interpreter, took his undoubting way to the official yamen; the heavy gates clanged behind him, and he found himself in the presence, not only of the Taotai, but of Wang Lo and a mob of pigtailed soldiers. Nevertheless, he carried himself unflinchingly, demanding his rights and threatening punishment, until, at a signal from the Taotai, he was seized by the soldiers, thrown down and barbarously beaten with split bamboos—one of the cruellest forms of Chinese torture, for the edges of the concave bamboo cut into the flesh and

pound it to a pulp. Then, half dead, the unfortunate skipper was flung into a sampan and sent off to the *Spray*, while at the same moment the guns of the fort were trained on the schooner.

There was nothing for it but to make full sail for Hong Kong, leaving old Gow with the comfortable conviction that the wisdom of the foreigners was as folly in the hands of the Celestials.

This was the narrative, interrupted by King Tom's frequent and fervent maledictions on his own simplicity.

"I hope it never gets home," he said. "I'd never hear the end of it in County Clare. It's a nice play-boy I am to take a hiding like this and say 'Thank you' for it."

Whilst we were all consulting over this precious story, the *Impérieuse*, flying Sir James Hope's flag, arrived on the scene, homeward bound, and it became necessary to lay the matter before the admiral; but he, having handed the command over to Admiral Kuper, would only advise. It was, besides, desirable that King Tom should have a little time to regain his health, and we were meanwhile hurried off to the English settlement at Swatow, which was said to be in danger of attack by Taiping rebels.

This expedition afforded nothing of interest beyond some remarkably good duck-shooting, performed under difficulties, for we were up to our knees in mud. The bags would, however, have been nothing but for the agility of the Chinese, who, with a flat board fastened to one foot, and shoving themselves along with the other, skated on the soft mud with the utmost ease and retrieved the duck in sportsmanlike fashion.

A week later a gunboat arrived, bearing the re-

doubtable King Tom and with orders for me. They were as follows: I was to take on board Mr. O'Donovan, master of the *Spray*, and proceed to Tam Sui, then and there to investigate the circumstances leading to the late barbarous assault. If it were proved unjustifiable, I was to demand an apology and payment of not less than $1,000 to Mr. O'Donovan. I was further directed to make inquiry as to the $1,700 said to be paid to Wang Lo as deposit for camphor. There had been no Vice-Consul at Tam Sui during the *Spray*'s visit, but one had recently been appointed, with whom I was to co-operate.

The following day I stowed King Tom in my cabin, and, facing the north-east monsoon, we sailed for Tam Sui.

The wind howled, and the green seas swept over our decks fore and aft; but we had fine times below, for His Majesty King Tom, with a comfortable glass of grog beside him, was the life and soul of the party, telling yarns and experiences inspiring and glorious to the ring of smokers at his elbow.

Off Tam Sui we met the gunboat *Havoc*, with the newly appointed Vice-Consul on board; and, under King Tom's pilotage, we crossed the dangerous bar, anchoring off what was then a small town, but is now (under Japanese occupation) a big city. The Vice-Consul immediately came on board to pay his respects. He was a well-informed young man, speaking Chinese fluently—a valuable coadjutor, as I thought; a serious hindrance, as I was shortly to find.

The next day he assumed his official duties, and swelling with youthful zeal and consequence, demanded that the whole business should be left in his hands, and the force I commanded placed at his disposal.

Here was an *impasse!* In vain did I point out my peremptory orders to act alone, or in conjunction with him. Vainly I offered the presidential chair, and expressed my willingness to sit by his side with the best grace imaginable. The dignity of youth is unassailable. Nothing would do, and he declined all compromise, whilst, having done my best to conciliate him, I was not sorry to assume the undivided responsibility.

The Taotai was sent a copy of the charges preferred, with the request that he and his witnesses would meet me at the Consulate for formal investigation.

There was no small stir in Tam Sui as the Taotai, in his gilt chair of state, escorted by a body of spearmen, passed through the narrow street. I sat at the head of a long table, with the contending parties on my right and left, a guard of marines being drawn up in the consular court. The Consul acted as my interpreter, but declined to sit at the table—a symptom of dissension very obvious to the wily old Gow, and materially affecting the result.

His case was that King Tom had come to his peaceful yamen armed with a huge knife, and brandishing a heavy stick in close proximity to his person, and that consequently gentle restraint and slight correction were regrettably necessary as a suasive influence and a means of self-defence—an excellent story indeed if there had not been a small but unadjustable difference of opinion amongst his witnesses.

On being asked why, with the large force at his disposal, he had not arrested the captain and handed him over to the higher authorities, he replied that when you are dealing with devils, you cannot act as courtesy dictates, and that he regretted to state that

he believed Captain O'Donovan to be a devil of the yellowest dye.

No more evidence forthcoming, and King Tom's body still bearing marks of barbarous treatment, it only remained for me to consider if it would be right or wise to permit such treatment of an English subject to pass without retribution.

I gave my decision in the following terms: By noon on the following day apologies and $1,200 from the Taotai to King Tom, the return of the deposit money (a point they did not seriously contest), or enforcement of these demands.

There was no trace of feeling in Gow's imperturbable face as my judgment was given; not a movement of the slender yellow hands with their silver-tipped nails resting on the violet robe. He bowed the exact number of times that the strictest etiquette in the world requires as the court broke up. Yet without a word spoken, he was as conscious of the dissensions between the Vice-Consul and myself as if he had been present at our meeting; and he took his measures accordingly. When we returned to the *Snake* I had some difficulty in restraining King Tom's exultation. My wisdom was exalted above King Solomon's; my valour cast that of Brian Boru into the shade. Already he seemed to finger the dollars in his pocket, and that they should come from Gow's was the sweetest plaster for his wounds.

But I think I never saw a face so elongate and a jaw drop quite so low as when we woke next morning to the intelligence that Gow, with all the officials, and (worse!) with all the cash, had fled to the mountains, and that the Consul had hauled his flag down, leaving the whole control of the town and port in my hands.

King Tom might swear—he did, and very freely—but that was no help to me against this bolt from the blue. The one certain matter in the midst of much uncertainty was that if a Chinaman could govern Tam Sui, so also could an Englishman, and probably much better. I therefore took this course, and appointed Lieutenant-Commander Packe, of the gunboat *Havoc*, Governor and Captain of the port.

Never was a man more genuinely pleased or better fitted for the post. A true sailor loves a job off his own beat, and he was no exception to the rule.

Our first thought was the Custom-House, for there were several European ships besides the junks loading and unloading. But happily we found a table of duties and port dues. So their work proceeded without a hitch, and the skippers rejoiced in their escape from Gow's system of bribery and corruption. A guard of marines was landed, and the citizens submitted to the altered régime with Chinese indifference.

All this done, the *Snake* sailed for Foo Chow, the Viceroy of which province had supreme control of the island of Formosa. It was therefore necessary that he should adjudicate on Gow's recalcitrancy, and after various delays and much letter-writing, Mr. Sinclair, our able Consul at Foo Chow, arranged a meeting.

It was a stately ceremony when the Viceroy, magnificent in yellow robe, red button and peacock feather, gave us an audience in his palace, surrounded by his Mandarins. Seated on a raised daïs between pillars lacquered with fiery dragons swallowing impossible oceans, he listened attentively whilst Mr. Sinclair stated the case in fluent Chinese. I followed in an argument which may or may not have suffered in translation.

Questions were asked; the Mandarins were gravely consulted, and as gravely responded. The decision followed.

My demand must be complied with. Gow was degraded and superseded on condition that the matter dropped immediately, and no reference was made to the authorities at Pekin. With high ceremony on both sides the audience concluded, and with the $1,200 and inward gratification I returned to Tam Sui.

There I found Lieutenant Packe with about $8,000 in his possession, a progressive trade and peaceful subjects, and by no means anxious to resign the cares of government and return to his 10 by 5 feet cabin in the *Havoc*. But his reign was over, the new Taotai was appointed, the Consul rehoisted his flag, and poor old Gow crept back from the mountains.

Wang Lo refunded the deposit money, and the old order thus restored, we sailed for Hong Kong to receive the approval we thought due to our consummate diplomacy. Alas for human hopes! On our return we found Sir James Hope gone and the new Commander-in-Chief (my old captain in the *Thetis*) present, flying his flag on board the *Euryalus*.

His views of Sir James Hope's interference did not, it seemed, coincide with mine. I had felt all along that we might certainly have a more immaculate protégé than poor King Tom, and that the contraband opium trading might easily have an ugly look. Still, a British subject had suffered gross indignity, and it was a shock that when I made my report the admiral's thumbs sought his waistcoat arm-holes, and he angrily denounced the whole business.

"As for O'Donovan," he said, "that man is the greatest buccaneer on the coast. He thoroughly de-

served the thrashing he got, and I only regret that Her Majesty's ships were in any way employed for him. What have you done with the dollars?"

Fortunately I had not handed them over to King Tom, so I answered that they were on board the *Snake*, waiting for his order to transfer them to Captain O'Donovan.

"Very well," said the admiral, "send them on board my flag-ship. He shan't have them, and let him know that he may consider himself lucky that he is not arrested and punished as a smuggler. The cheek of the brute, coming like this to *us* to see him through!"

Here was a pretty communication to be made to King Tom! But there were consolations. He had quite recovered his buoyant health and spirits; he had had a delightful cruise, regained his deposit money, and witnessed the downfall of old Gow. Nevertheless, he was not disposed to take the decision patiently. I had not expected he would. "As if I cared a pig's whistle for the blessed dollars," he said. "Why, if I had them in my hand this minute I'd pitch them overboard and welcome, for the sake of half an hour's straight talk with old Gow. But I'll get even with him yet, and so you may tell the admiral."

I could do no more, and all hands turned up to say good-bye to the genial-hearted Irishman.

But I was not done with King Tom and his affairs. A month after I reached England came a formidable letter from the Admiralty, enclosing despatches from the Vice-Consul at Tam Sui, from Sir Frederick Bruce, our Minister at Pekin, and finally from Lord John Russell, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, and all this official thunder was directed at my humble self. My pro-

ceedings had been high-handed and contrary to my duty. I might have seriously jeopardised my country's interests, and involved the nation in a Chinese war, and so forth and so forth. Finally, satisfaction was demanded from the Admiralty at my expense. I stood to my guns, however, and wrote immediately to Sir James Hope, knowing well that he had never deserted a brother-officer, and especially one acting under his advice. He was not slow to respond, and together we fought it out with the Foreign Office.

Eventually the Admiralty threw a sop to Lord John Russell. They admitted that "Commander Moresby's zeal had outrun the strict line of duty," and that was all that could be extracted from them.

But I could bear this mild censure very well in view of the fact that I was almost immediately offered one of the finest commanders' commands on the China Station.

I never met King Tom again, but I am prepared to assert that somehow and somewhere he did get even with old Gow.

CHAPTER XX

H.M.S. "SNAKE" (*continued*)—HOMEWARD BOUND

"Upon no earthly sea with transient roar,
Unto no earthly air he sets his sail;
But far beyond our vision and our hail
Is heard for ever, and is seen no more."

W. WATSON.

"Blessed are they that have the home-longing, for they shall go home."—*German Legend.*

WE were ordered to England. Our work in China was done, and, having passed through the Commander-in-Chief's inspection with congratulations from him on the good feeling prevailing on board (and a truer word was never said), we got under way, and, running under the flag-ship's stern, gave three hearty cheers. Admiral Kuper came on the poop and ordered a response, dear old Josling, the flag-captain, leading the men off with "Three cheers for the *Snake* going home."

We cheered again for our farewell, and then bore away as the admiral signalled: "Success attend you."

The *Sans Pareil*, an 80-gun screw liner, left Hong Kong with us, and we had a pleasant voyage, the North-East Monsoon stilling its fury to waft us onward. We beat the *Sans Pareil* to Singapore by a few hours, and left on February 13, after a week's stay amongst old friends, carrying a despatch for the Dutch admiral

at Batavia. The authorities there were most hospitable, and we saw much of that glorious tropical island, marvelling indeed that, after possessing it for five years, England should have given back this pearl of the Eastern Seas to Holland.

Swiftly our little craft ran west with the South-East Trade on her beam. We were averaging ten knots, but on February 24 wind and sea both indicated an approaching hurricane. The bearing of the cyclone centre was a point abaft our beam, so we determined to crack on and leave the storm astern. As the wind headed us to the south-west, we kept her off to the north, and on the 26th had the satisfaction of bringing the storm centre well on our port quarter. It had passed astern, and we were safe, without having lost a rope-yarn. The *Sans Pareil* reached St. Helena shortly after us, and on comparing notes we found she had been close to the *Snake* in the hurricane; but instead of running, she was hove-to, to let the storm pass ahead—a fatal mistake, for she lost her boats and spars, and sustained much other damage.

A sight which modern eyes can happily never witness (but common enough then) awaited us at St. Helena. H.M.S. *Zebra* had sent in a slaver prize, a little graceful schooner of only 100 tons, with raking spars and a mainmast 92 feet in length.

On board this fairy-like craft were stowed no less than 427 slaves, and probably many more had died before she was captured. They were stowed horribly in three tiers, one above the other, allowing just head room for a crouching position, the lower and middle tiers receiving the filth and abominations of those above them. The officers and crew had ample quarters, therefore the space in which these poor creatures were

fettered to endure the horrors of the Middle passage was about 40 feet by 15 feet, and 12 feet in depth.

Nothing more terrible could be conceived of any Inferno, and though they had been released and cleansed, the fœtid smell still overpowered all else. It is a merciful characteristic that the buoyancy of this unhappy race brings speedy forgetfulness of past trouble. Once set free they were chattering and laughing like a parcel of schoolboys, awaiting their removal to the comfortable barracks on shore; and the schooner was sold by the Prize Courts. Touching at Ascension and arriving at St. Vincent on April 30 at midnight, I mistook a large American man-of-war paddler for the English mail-steamer, and they, with equal obtuseness, mistook us for the famous *Alabama*, then cruising in these waters.

Indeed, our resemblance to the Confederate cruiser was exact save in point of size, for she was a little bigger. Directly we anchored I sent a boat for letters and news, and, to the amazement of my officer on reaching the deck, he found himself surrounded by armed men, though both sides were hugely amused when the double mistake was cleared up.

Of course I exchanged calls with the American captain, but relations were a little strained at the time, and many were the fierce tirades against the iniquities of the British Government which I had to hear with patience and decorum. But our resemblance to the *Alabama* was to involve us in a really critical situation a few days later.

We were steaming in the early morning for the anchorage at St. Michael's, when a large American corvette slipped her cable and steamed out at full speed, the men at their quarters and guns bearing on

us. Recollecting the case of the *Little Belt* and the *President*, I sent everyone below except those necessary for navigation, to prevent any possibility of guns going off "by accident," and then, hoisting the ensign and pennant, stood on.

We were well within the three-mile limit, and therefore, being in neutral waters, a complimentary call was due to us from foreign men-of-war which had arrived before ourselves; but instead of this the corvette ranged alongside, with her ports open and guns kept trained on us, and hailed, "What ship is that?"

I asked the same question, and after a marked hesitation they replied: "This is the U.S. sloop *Kearsarge*" (afterwards to become so famous when she met and sank the real *Alabama*). I gave the information asked for, but it was evidently not believed, for she kept close alongside, and, after we had anchored, instead of sending a boat on board she steamed round us, still with the men at their guns, so close that her yard-arms almost scraped ours. Nothing could have been more ridiculously like the way in which dogs walk on their tiptoes round and round each other when spoiling for a fight. But this last inspection was more satisfactory, for about an hour later Captain Winsloe, of the *Kearsarge*, came on board and apologised, adding that he had entertained no doubt of our being the *Alabama*.

Leaving St. Michael's, we ran with a fair wind for the Channel, where a sad and unforeseen event awaited us.

Nearly four years had gone by since the *Snake* had left it outward bound, and, except for my own appointment, there had been few changes among the crew. All were looking forward to home as sailors only can, and the first lieutenant, Streeten, was, besides, engaged to be married, and his honest heart was filled with joyful

anticipation. The fair wind blew and brought us within sixty miles of the Lizard, when, with a rising barometer, up sprang the treacherous east wind, "his weapon a dagger carried under a black cloak," and, with a staggering blow, the gale struck us in full face, bringing with it a most dangerous, confused sea.

Nothing could have been more unexpected, and the only course was to make the little craft snug. She had weathered many and many a gale in safety, and so, we believed, she would do again; therefore we lay-to under fore-and-aft storm trysails on the port tack, heading for the French coast, and got steam up, the engines just moving to give her steerage way. As I always took the first watch (8 to 12), about 7.30 I went below for a cup of tea, leaving Streeten in charge of the deck, with Spry the second master.

I had not been below ten minutes when a terrific sea struck the ship, and my cabin filled with water. A crash followed, with a dreadful tearing and rending noise, and I struggled on deck to see the weather bulwarks, hammock nettings, and many of the stanchions swept clean away down to the covering board, and the sea boiling over the upper deck, which it buried in water as she lurched to windward. On the lee side was a mass of boats and wreckage—a scene of confused horror. But where were Streeten and Spry? I saw men struggling in the water, lifting the wreckage and dragging the officers from under it; and, imagining no more, I gave my urgently needed attention to our pitiful plight, and, turning all hands up, began to lash our light boats to the weather stanchions to protect us from the fearful inrush of the sea.

Suddenly and very quietly our young doctor came behind me, and, laying his hand on my shoulder to

catch my attention in the shrieking of the wind, said:

"Mr. Streeten is dead, sir, and Mr. Spry unconscious."

In my horror at the news, I appealed to him to say he was mistaken, but he shook his head. I crossed the deck, and there, by the fading light, I saw my well-loved friend and comrade lying with a smile on his lips, and eyes looking upward through the surging waves that dashed over him, but dead indeed.

We laid him tenderly in his little cabin, and that was our welcome to English coasts. The east wind had done its worst.

When the sea struck the ship he and Spry had been sheltering under the weather bulwarks. Sweeping all else before it, it tore also our eight-oared cutter from its fastenings over the ward-room skylight. They were swept under it, and the boat settled down upon them, breaking Streeten's chest in and causing instant death, Spry escaping with a serious scalp wound.

An anxious and miserable night followed. An immense quantity of water had found its way below, and, in addition, she had sprung a leak which we could not find, and, in spite of all hands pumping and baling, it gained on us rapidly.

The situation was alarming, for the only chance for safety seemed to be to race her with the engines before the gale, and inject water from the bilge; but disabled and deep in the water as we were, and with such a sea, it seemed but a forlorn hope.

I was about to give the order when the chief engineer reported that the leak had been found. The sea-cock of the condensing pipe low down had been blown off. We plugged it, and so the critical moment passed; but at eleven another heavy sea swept us, and

I and others were washed to leeward, but this time we escaped with a shaking.

Finally, as day broke the gale abated its fury, and when we could look into each other's faces, it seemed that not one night, but long weeks of darkness, had gone by, taking with them the hope and the joy of our home-coming.

We worked as hard as we were able and cleared the wreckage, the men going down when they could to take a last look at a friend they had all loved and revered. And this was not wonderful, for in my long experience Lieutenant Streeten stands exceptional and alone—not for his courage and firmness, combined with the kindest wisdom in dealing with men (for many men have these), but for the high aspirations so woven into his nature, that his interest in each one of the ship's company became a living and beautiful thing, which all understood and not the basest could take advantage of.

So it was natural that in the Bible-class, which included a quarter of the ship's company, Streeten would never take a leading part, but sat among the men as one of themselves—the simplest member there. These were flogging days, but never a lash fell on board the *Snake*, and our successive Commanders-in-Chief bore witness alike to the perfect order and discipline which prevailed, and, indeed, were attributable to his methods.

We read the prayers appointed for deliverance after a storm in deep sorrow of heart.

On reaching Plymouth in the evening, I reported myself to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Houston Stewart. He received me at his dinner-table amidst a crowd of guests, and, in spite of my protests, I was made to sit by his side in my rough pilot coat, thinking of nothing but the storm-beaten little ship I had left,

and dazed with the contrast between the appearances and the realities of life and death.

The next day Streeten's mother, a widow, came on board. When the men knew this, the petty officers told me they wished to see her if she could meet them. She instantly said she would do so, and she went from the little cabin and stood on deck, a tall and noble-looking woman in perfect self-control. There were the assembled petty officers, hats in hand, and with tears on some of their rough faces as they tried to find the words they wished to utter. There was a pause, but no awkward one, for they and she understood one another. Then an old boatswain's mate, addressing me, blurted out: "Tell her, sir—tell her that we loved him;" and having got this out, they turned and fairly ran forward to the forecastle. And it was all they could say or did say. That broke down her stately composure, yet it must have been a proud moment, too, for such a mother.

The Duke of Somerset, First Lord of the Admiralty, on reading my report of Lieutenant Streeten's death, and the loss the service had thus sustained, at once placed a naval cadet's appointment at the disposal of this lady, and she nominated a nephew of the same name.

Our inspection was nominal, for neither guns nor spars could be worked; but all proceeded to my heart's desire, and Mr. Jefferies, the gunner, received a special commendation for his efficiency when left in such circumstances, as my only executive officer.

On June 3, 1863, the pennant (then flying from a boat-hook where our tall mainmast had been) was hauled down, and the commission ended.

CHAPTER XXI

H.M.S. "ARGUS"

"A charming people, glad and gay,
With fan and robe and graceful art!
We deigned to praise their winning way,
But could not guess the iron heart,
The cold persistence and the guile,
That couched beneath the covering smile."

L. H.

My late chief, Sir James Hope, wished to see me afloat again, and on November 12, 1863, I was given command of the *Argus*, a steam-sloop of 1,080 tons, carrying six guns, on the China Station, and two months later the granite rocks and bare hills of Hong Kong were before me once more.

A kindly greeting from old friends occupied a few days, and I then proceeded to Shanghai, where I found the *Argus*, and took command, finding orders to convey our first British Minister (Sir Rutherford Alcock) to Japan, with his wife. Thus began my friendly relations with the great Eastern diplomatist. Sir Rutherford had been for nine years Consul at Shanghai, from the time when three or four European houses represented the foreign settlement until it stretched for two miles along the river-side, reaching almost to the walls of the old city, and displaying the palatial dwellings of the European merchants.

He frequently spoke of the great changes in which

he had borne so prominent a part, especially of a trade raised during his nine years of office from £16,000,000 to £29,000,000, and still advancing by leaps and bounds.

By this time the Taipings had been completely crushed by Chinese Gordon and his Ever-Victorious army, and the centre of interest was shifted from China to Japan. Chinese trade was secured, England taking the lion's share (not, indeed, by lawful means, for the Chinese governmental system made this impossible with Europeans, whose one engrossing idea was to make as much money as possible before shattered health called a halt), and commercial enterprise desired fresh worlds to conquer.

This new field Japan offered, and thither every house in Hong Kong was sending its agents, expecting that bribery and corruption would find the Japanese as pliable as the Chinese.

Money was doubtless made, but the laws of Japan proved to be uncomfortably rigid, and the police disagreeably vigilant for the dishonest practices prevailing in the Celestial Empire, and it is possible that these two facts laid a foundation for the mutual esteem which was to develop in after-years in so remarkable a fashion.

On February 22, with Sir Rutherford and Lady Alcock for messmates, we shaped our course for the Ass's Ears off Nagasaki, and on the 24th we made the land, but having had no sights, could not tell our whereabouts.

No lighthouses existed, and few landmarks were then known to enable us to fix our position. So we put her head off shore, and the next day, picking up a Japanese fishing-boat, we found a pilot, who brought

us into the beautiful bay (not unlike a Norwegian fjord), and the little-known Japan, with all its mysteries and enchantments, was before us.

Sir Rutherford was, of course, received by the Japanese authorities and the foreign men-of-war with salutes and honours. I would gladly have accompanied him on his official visits, but the humbler consideration of providing food for my guests on the coming passage to Yokohama kept me on board. For my steward with a long face reported that, excepting fish, a few eggs, and vegetables, nothing could be had from this nation of vegetarians. Further and anxious search showed that sheep were not, and bullocks only kept for agriculture. Some were offered from the plough, but they were worn-out beasts, much fitter for shoe-leather than food, and the fowls were equally patriarchal. It apparently occurring to nobody that anything in the nature of flesh was necessary to support life, there was nothing for it but to take our privations philosophically, and this we all did.

Then came the first delightful sight of the Japanese at home. The land-locked bay, its scattered islands, the wooded hills and water-fed ravines were lovely. But we had also heard of the piquante prettiness of the women, and when on landing we found them with eyebrows plucked out, lips covered with a brick-red paste, and displaying rows of blackened teeth, the first feeling was one of repulsion and disappointment. We had not yet learnt that this extraordinary sacrifice of beauty was made only by the matrons, and with the object of raising their virtue above a shade of suspicion —an extreme but doubtless perfectly efficacious step. Amongst the men almost the only article of clothing appeared to be a wide straw hat—a fashion admirably

designed to set off their exquisitely tattooed bodies, on which artistic and elaborate ornamentation, such as we had never seen before, supplied in no small measure the place of a garment.

Bound as we were for Yeddo, the Nagasaki shops did not offer much attraction; but there they were, with their walls of panelled paper, sliding to and fro at will, and there were the naked children, and all the occupations of home-life—sleeping, washing, eating—carried on in full view of the man in the street. Never, surely, was such a sociable people! Half an hour's walk in Nagasaki revealed more of national life than many months' existence in any other country. We viewed it all with astonished interest, so great was the novelty.

Sir Rutherford was anxious to push on, therefore on the second day we sailed for Yokohama. The weather was abominable, and poor Lady Alcock suffered dreadfully. For two days nothing could be cooked except tea, and Sir Rutherford and I had to sit on the deck and eat with our fingers what we could get, which, indeed, was little enough. However, on the fourth day we steamed up the Yokohama Gulf, and found awaiting us the Commander-in-Chief (my old captain), Sir A. Kuper, on board the *Euryalus*, with a large number of the China Squadron.

Yokohama, where astute Japanese diplomacy had fixed the foreign settlement, possessed all the features which they considered desirable for isolating the intruders, and for ejecting them with ease when that desirable time should come.

It was surrounded by extensive marshes, divided into paddy-fields, and having no direct communication with the interior, for the beautiful hills beyond were outside treaty bounds.

Before a European landed the Japanese had built piers on the foreshore, and constructed a wide causeway across the paddy-fields, barred by formidable military gates, to give access to Yeddo. They also ran up houses and godowns for the merchants, with one long street for Japanese dealers in silks and curios, and having further established a Custom-House, official buildings, and even a Yoshiwara, were able, when the foreigners landed, to say: "All is done; what more do you want?"

It was all very characteristic, as we may see in the light of later events, and it was equally characteristic on our side that we should demand freedom of access to the hills, liberty to shoot game, and security for our persons—the very things which the Japanese had decided we should not have. Of course a struggle began, and of course Sir Rutherford, with his firmness and patience, combined with an invincible determination to submit to no Oriental restrictions, was bound to win in the long-run.

His first demand was that a sanatorium should be established as an absolute necessity on the high bluff at the south-east end of the settlement, above the miasmic air of the marshes. This done, barracks were erected for a detachment of soldiers and a marine battalion. Over this bluff we then could find our way into the beautiful country, received everywhere by the villagers with the gentleness and courtesy always characterising the non-political Japanese. But our radius was small unless in considerable and well-armed parties, for the Government pretended that they were unable to protect us from the possible assaults of the great Daimios' retainers—the Samurai, or two-sworded men. These swarmed through the

country, and even dared to attack the foreign legations in Yeddo, which were in consequence removed to Yokohama. I myself had a narrow escape. A friend of mine, Major Baldwin, of the 20th Regiment, asked me to accompany him with a party to see the great Buddhist temple of Dhybuts. I accepted, but was prevented from going by some unexpected work. Baldwin and Lieutenant Bird, of the same regiment, went. They were attacked by a band of Samurai, and hacked to death with ghastly wounds.

These Samurai were generally the retainers of the powerful Daimios Choshiu and Satsuma, whose feudal dominions were at the entrance of the Inland Sea. For this and other insults and assaults on foreigners reparation and apology were demanded, but the Mikado's Government professed itself unable to coerce or persuade the Daimios to restitution. As a last resource the admiral despatched Captain Dowell in the *Barrosa*, with the despatch vessel *Cormorant* under his orders, to the Inland Sea to negotiate personally with Choshiu. This manœuvre resulted in the forts of Simonosaki (by Choshiu's orders) firing across the bows of our ships, and refusing to let them pass; and after such an insult to our flag there could be but one course, and that to teach him better manners in the only way he could appreciate.

Happily the other civilised nationalities concurred in Sir Rutherford Alcock's views, and it was settled that American, French, and Dutch vessels of war should co-operate.

The negotiations dragged along for some months, during which we considerably increased our knowledge of the Japanese. Their politeness and gentleness made it more and more mysterious that a people

so courteous and lovable should transgress in outward appearances not only the laws of decency binding on Christians, Mohammedans, and Buddhists, but even those recognised by most savages. Some of their temples, many of their shops, had displays which might possibly, but not probably, appear under lock and key in an anatomical museum. Yet as the women showed no concern in frequenting such places, it was clear that this evinced no depravity, but simply a custom possibly in perfect accord with absolute innocence of intention, or the spirit expressed in the fine old Shinto prayer: "Our eyes may see some uncleanness, but let not our mind see things that are not clean. Our ears may hear some uncleanness, but let not our mind hear things that are not clean."

Still, the test struck me as a severe one.

Twice I accompanied Sir R. Alcock to Yeddo whilst he interviewed a high official, I and some others remaining meanwhile at the old English Legation, situated in a beautifully wooded park and connected with the main street by a long avenue. Here it was that Sir Rutherford and four Europeans of his staff had been attacked by a band of Samurai. A strong Japanese guard protected the place, but these fled, and gave admission in the dead of night to the would-be assassins. Sir Rutherford, roused from sleep, seized his pistols, and at the same moment Laurence Oliphant (the well-known writer), secretary of the Legation, and Mr. Morrison, an attaché, joined him, both covered with blood from fearful sword-cuts on their arms and foreheads. They were quite disabled, and Sir Rutherford had to remain to defend them from a momentarily expected attack, while the other attaché guarded the passage leading to the room, and there

succeeded in shooting down the leaders and holding them at bay, until finally the civilian Japanese servants came to the rescue, and further mischief was averted. We saw on the door-posts and panels the deep sword-cuts and stains of blood still remaining in mute witness.

Those who told the story believed that but for the cool courage and resource of Sir Rutherford not a European would have escaped. And on this occasion again no redress could be had from the chiefs of the Samurai.

Washington has been described as a city of magnificent distances, but the Yeddo of forty-two years ago, as seen from the height of the British Legation, dwarfed all other distances to pigmy proportions. The broad ascending valley, with a circuit of perhaps twenty-five miles, had its crowded streets divided by the parks and castles of the Daimios, and the still richer and lovelier temple gardens garlanded with lavish beauty of leaf and blossom, whilst all was crowned by the palace and domains of the Tycoon in their stately seclusion.

I recall the almost startled pleasure evoked by the sight of these gardens. I had never, of course, seen anything even remotely resembling their exquisiteness of design. They were pictures flung upon a natural background—or, rather, Nature herself persuaded into the service of a consummate art effect—perfectly calculated and carried out with an austerity that was in itself a new development of beauty to Western eyes I looked and marvelled, and found it impossible to put into words the delight I felt.

My next visit was official. It was arranged that all the European and American Ministers should assemble

at Yeddo for a diplomatic discussion, with a gathering of Daimios and high officials—a species of Japanese Privy Council.

The deliberations were to last three days, the Ministers of each nation arriving in their own warships; but the Americans having none present, the *Argus* was directed to embark the representative of that country, Sir Rutherford taking H.M.S. *Tartar*. Personally, I should have found my guest excellent company but that their civil war was raging at the time, and the trend Gladstone had given to public opinion in England was a perfect obsession with him. The subject would crop up without the slightest provocation, and in spite of every effort I could make to avoid it. He was a regular Down-Easter, and with his strongly marked Yankee features and nasal twang giving emphasis to all he said, his frequent theme, with slender variation, was:

"Sir, we hate England. I am bringing my children up to hate the Britishers, and I only hope" (rising from his seat at my table and assuming a devotional attitude) "that the Almighty will spare me to see the day when we shall have settled with the South, and can take England by the throat for all the insults and sneers she has heaped on us. The Lord grant it!" One could not be angry, the ignorance and sincerity were alike so obvious; and to me individually, though one of the accursed race, he was the best of friends, and took infinite trouble to provide a horse that I might accompany him on a visit to the Tycoon's domain. I found him the kindliest of men when not actively occupied in twisting the Lion's tail, which should be used to the process by this time.

The domain was surrounded by a moat many miles

in extent, 100 feet wide and 30 feet deep; but, strange to say, it was no defence, for of the many bridges crossing it in picturesque fashion, not one was a drawbridge. The palace itself, however, had been utterly destroyed by fire and was not yet rebuilt, so the beautiful grounds were the only reward of our curiosity, yet reward enough for any pilgrimage.

The next day the assemblage of the Council took place, and through the interest of my kindly American guest I was well mounted, whilst my brother-officers mostly had to toil on foot through the miles of streets leading to the official quarters.

The Ministers rode first with their escort and a Japanese guard to keep the streets clear of traffic, and so amidst an intense curiosity, concealed under a mask of the most exquisite courtesy, we reached the palace.

Before entering we carefully cleaned our shoes, that they might not sully the spotless Japanese mats, and were then joined by many officials in their strange native dress—a little boat-like *papier mâché* cap and stiff silk robes (from which their formidable swords projected), with huge butterfly-winged sleeves, and skirts that trailed on the ground. Thus escorted we passed through the painted sliding panels, with their exquisite subdued designs, where such delightful result is gained with such austere economy of means. Finally, we reached a large room of some twenty mats—Japanese rooms being estimated in size by the number of mats, 6 feet by 3 feet, which they contain.

Here the five members of the Council received us with all due ceremony—also in court dress, but in the most gravely coloured and simple taste, chiefly cool greys and blues—nothing of the gorgeousness usually associated with the East. I remember thinking the

effect extremely dignified and beautiful in its way, and well suited to the position of these authoritative persons. They marshalled us to an adjoining room of perhaps twenty-six mats, and there we were seated with the Ministers at a long narrow table, the noiseless servants gliding in with tiny copper pipes holding just a whiff of tobacco, to be followed by deliciously smelling white-wood boxes filled with sweetmeats made of seaweed, and the numerous courses of morsels of fish and vegetable served on little plates, now so familiar to all students of Japanese life, but at that time a very curious and fascinating novelty. We finished with rice and cakes, and our drink was champagne, sticky with sweetness, but provided as a very special compliment.

The Ministers were all accompanied by interpreters, so conversation was possible; but it did not add to the hilarity of the occasion that behind every two persons, standing by the tall pictured screens, were secretaries noting down on tablets each word of the conversation. There must have been a pretty jumble of notes! A ceremonious departure followed, with the presentation of a box of seaweed sweetmeats to each guest. On the following day we rejoined the fleet at Yokohama.

All was now preparation for the Inland Sea expedition, and what ships would be selected for the service was the burning question. I had no anxiety as to my own share in the proceedings, for I felt certain the admiral would not neglect his old gunnery lieutenant, and so it proved.

The combined fleet—English, French, Dutch, and American — was led by the admiral with his flag in the *Euryalus*. Our force consisted of the *Conqueror*, 84-screw battleship, and six corvettes, the

Argus, and a gunboat. The French admiral Jurès, in the screw frigate *Sémiramis*, had a corvette and small despatch boat, the Dutch four small corvettes, and America was represented by a hired merchant steamer, on board of which one gun had been mounted. Of the English ships—to economise coal—one half towed the other half, the *Argus* having to lug the gunboat along, and so we got down the Gulf of Yokohama, and when clear of the land we were all ordered to disregard the admiral's motions and make the best of our way to Hime Sima, a small island in the Inland Sea, about twelve miles to the east of Simonosaki.

CHAPTER XXII

H.M.S. "ARGUS"—*continued*

"Not with dreams, but with blood and with iron
Shall a nation be moulded to last."

SWINBURNE.

"So at the threat ye shall summon, so at the need ye shall send,
Men, not children or servants, tempered and taught to the end;
Cleansed of servile panic, slow to dread or despise,
Humble because of knowledge, mighty by sacrifice."

KIPLING.

ENTERING the Inland Sea we had our first experience of the fierce currents and "chow chow" waters of its narrow entrances from the ocean. With a full head of steam we could only just stem the rush, and when caught in the boiling swirl we were swung helplessly round until we crawled out of it.

We anchored off Hime Sima on September 2, and by the following day the combined fleet had assembled.

From the high peak of the island a glorious view of the many-islanded sea and its beautiful shores was spread before us; but our eyes turned to Simonosaki through the impossible distance, hoping to discover some clue to our enemy's defences.

On the succeeding day the fleet started at 9 a.m., the nine English ships forming the central line, the Dutch the starboard, and the French the port, and in this order we proceeded through the tranquil, lake-like waters till we anchored in the Straits of Simonosaki, just out of range of the batteries.

Fortunately for us, Choshiu, on the north and west side of the straits, was our only enemy, for the great Daimio Buzen, on the opposite side of the strait, was strictly neutral. Had it been otherwise our difficulties, thus placed between two fires, would have been greatly increased. A close reconnaissance was made, the admiral passing to and fro before the forts, and, strange to say, without any interference.

They could not have been more weakly placed for a sea attack. A wooded valley some six or seven miles wide lay between two lofty bluffs, and along its foreshore, just above high-water mark, were ranged the principal batteries in groups of guns, protected by a palisaded parapet. One small battery was placed on the northern bluff among the trees, and had the others been similarly hidden the result might have been very different.

The next day at 2 p.m., when the tide suited, the corvette squadron of seven ships took up their position before the batteries, and about 1,000 yards off. The light squadron of five ships, taking advantage of a bight in the land, assailed the same batteries on the flank, while the two flag-ships and the *Conqueror*, at long range, joined in the attack, the Japanese permitting all these preparations without firing a shot. The *Argus* was ordered to hold herself in readiness to assist any disabled ship, and as this meant keeping out of all danger, it was more than human nature could bear. Therefore, directly the ships had taken up position I signalled (relying on my old chief's favour) "Permission to engage," and joyfully we found the answer affirmative, followed by "Join the inshore squadron."

At 3 p.m. the signal was made to begin firing. At once the batteries opened, and the roar echoing

through the hills on either side of the narrow straits began a most picturesque action. The *Argus* had joined the light squadron, but there seemed so overwhelming a fire concentrated on the seashore batteries that I directed ours on the small battery hidden amongst the trees on the bluff, the flash and smoke giving us the exact range. We could not silence it altogether, but its return was slow and badly directed, so that we incurred no damage.

In about an hour only a few guns from the batteries were making a feeble reply; nor had any material injury been inflicted on the fleet. At six o'clock the Japanese ceased firing altogether. But, as it was then too late to take possession, the *Perseus* (Commander Kingston) and the Dutch corvette *Medusa* landed their men, and spiked the deserted guns in No. 5 Battery—a valuable service, for next morning most of the guns recommenced the action.

At daylight the *Argus* collected the marines of the squadron to form part of the force landing to take possession of the batteries, and whilst we were alongside the *Tartar* for this purpose the forts reopened their fire, and with effect, several men being killed and wounded before a return fire silenced them.

Missing the first lieutenant of the *Tartar* from the bridge, and having occasion to speak to him, I hailed another officer to ask his whereabouts. He shouted a reply, and, as I failed to hear, shouted again at the top of a stentorian voice. Still I shook my head, and, in despair, he turned round and vigorously slapped his back in a pantomime that conveyed nothing to me but the usual sense of highly contemptuous retort.

Wrathfully I demanded an explanation. Alas! when it came it proved to be that my old friend had been

desperately wounded by a shot in that part of his body—so near are tragedy and farce! Happily the wound did not kill him, as the doctors at the time expected.

Excepting for the fierce tides, it was not difficult to land, and all the batteries were taken without loss or practical resistance, the Japanese retreating up the valley.

It was a marvel to me that they had held out so long, for excepting the traverses between the guns there was not the slightest protection from our shell-fire, which struck them full in the face. The extent of their losses was never revealed—a characteristic that has persisted to later and greater times. The guns were spiked and dismounted, gun platforms and magazines blown up, and all seemed quiet. The French and Dutch contingent re-embarked, and I had returned to my ship, thinking all was over, when a really stiff bit of fighting occurred.

Captain Alexander advanced his men to dismantle the hidden battery on the bluff, and on his return he was fired on by Japanese concealed in the thick bush. Our men deployed in open order, and, with some loss, pushed them back, and immediately afterwards came upon a really well fortified stockade at the head of the valley, defended by field-guns. Just then the *Perseus* grounded under the captured batteries and remained fast, and it was therefore necessary to take the stockade and drive the Japanese back before night. To effect this purpose Colonel Suther led the marine battalion up one side of the valley, and Captain Alexander the naval brigade on the other. They were met by an exceedingly hot fire from the parapet of the ditch and the top of an 8-foot wall protecting the front of the

palisade, and in a few minutes seven of our seamen were killed and twenty-six wounded, besides several casualties among the marines. Captain Alexander was disabled by a musket-ball through the ankle. But our men were never checked, and rushing on, swarmed over the wall and won the stockade, the enemy disappearing in the bush. No less than three V.C.'s were given for this affair—one of them to Midshipman D. G. Boyes, the second case of so junior an officer receiving it.

It is interesting to consider how much the Japanese have learned and applied since this affair. Who could have predicted the glories of Manchuria and the Tsushima Sea within the lifetime of one who saw their early attempts at Western warfare? Surely never have such extraordinary powers of observation and application coincided in any nation known to history.

A few hours later the *Argus* embarked the marines, with the dead and wounded, and restored them to their ships. It is easy to write this, but I think it was about the most anxious job I have ever carried through. The darkness was impenetrable, the tide running through the strait at six knots an hour, and we had to cross it and sheer alongside the various ships. Our decks were crowded, and on the bridge were one or two of the senior captains of the fleet. They kindly made various suggestions, seeing the serious difficulties to be overcome; but my nerves were highly strung just then, and I had to request perfect silence. By great good luck we did the trick without an accident. On the following day, efforts to float the *Perseus* having failed, we were directed to undertake the job. The difficulty was to get a steady haul, and my predecessor had failed. There was a seven-knot

tide across her stern, so we dropped an anchor to each side, and then, securing our stern to the *Perseus*, we got a straight pull, heaving in our chains and steaming at the same time. She came off like a glove, amid general cheering. My old friend and shipmate Sir William Dowell was in command of the work, and with the disinterestedness which has distinguished all his brilliant career, he officially gave me the credit of the successful result.

There were still two small batteries on the bluff under which the town of Simonosaki lay. Our ships moved up to attack, but no resistance was made, and after two days' hard work all the captured guns (sixty-two in number) were embarked.

For ten days the fleet awaited events, and finally a Japanese officer brought unconditional surrender from Prince Choshiu, with a promise to erect no more batteries. Then, with all satisfactorily settled, and our cabins full of such lacquer and porcelain as the thriving little town of Simonosaki could provide, the fleet proceeded to make a demonstration through the Inland Sea. Headed by the *Euryalus* (the very perfection at that time of naval architecture), we swept in single line of battle through the broad sheets of water, connected by passages among the islands so narrow and intricate that as the leaders swung round the headlands it seemed to those astern as if their course lay over the land, until when our own turn came the mystery was solved, the helm continually shifting from hard-a-starboard to hard-a-port. Crowds watched us from towns and villages, many of them strongly fortified, with the great Daimios' palaces keeping watch and ward on the heights in all their feudal pomp.

The Japanese marked well this progress through their home waters, and it sent a thrill through the whole Empire of the Rising Sun.

We did not then know that it had sown the seeds of a policy resolute alike in waiting and in the certainty that the time would come when Japanese fleets and arms would hold their own against the proudest Western Powers.

Unfortunately, though we anchored off many prosperous and beautiful towns, it was thought imprudent to land. The Japanese, however, came off in crowds, and I find recorded in my diary: "One most beautiful girl, sitting like a princess among her plainer sisters." A lovelier face I never saw. She vindicated triumphantly all the accounts of Japanese beauty that had reached us from earlier visitors.

Osaka and Hiogo were visited, but no communications were allowed, though we anchored and closely inspected their defences. On September 27, by the Kii Channel, we passed out of the enchanting waters of the Inland Sea, when the surly Pacific determined that nothing should be lost by the contrast.

The *Argus* had again to tow the *Bouncer* gunboat. A falling glass and rising north-east gale met us, and made it evident that ordinary hawsers would never stand the drag, so we got her anchor-chains on board, and with three shackles out she rode like a duck in our wake. It blew great guns for three days. Our quarter boats were washed away, and we had a bad time all round. But on October 1 a lovely morning broke, and we found ourselves close to the flag-ship as the rest of the fleet closed in, and, forming line of battle, we steamed up to our anchorage off Yokohama, each ship cheering the *Euryalus* as we passed her. Not

till then did we let the *Bouncer* go. The towing chains had done their work, for in every other case the towing ships had used hawsers and had parted from their tow.

The humiliation of Choshiu and our procession through the Inland Sea had a marked effect on the Yeddo authorities, and a more placable disposition was at once displayed as the immediate result. Friendly visits took place, and it was finally decided that the English troops should parade for inspection in company with an equal number of Japanese.

This event came off on October 20, and we were little prepared for the brilliant historical display it offered. Our troops were commanded by Colonel Browne (brother of Mrs. Hemans, the poetess), and were, including the marines, about 1,200 men strong. Accompanied by Sir Rutherford Alcock and all the naval commanders, they marched to the parade-ground, where, drawn up to meet us, were some 600 Japanese representing their old feudal army, with an equal number representing the new, or, rather, a faint indication of their hopes for the future.

But the feudal army was a noble and never-to-be-forgotten display. There were mounted warriors in black burnished chain armour, with divided skirts of fine chain links that fell below the knee, each bearing a tabard on his breast, emblazoned brilliantly with the arms of his feudal lord. On their heads they wore crested head-dresses, with gorgets protecting the neck and falling on the shoulders, whilst the Daimios had steel eagle's wings soaring from their helmets. They held the heavy two-handed swords, burnished like silver and with the edge of a razor.

It is impossible to describe the colour and effect of these figures separately and in mass; it was almost

overwhelming to the eye, thrown up as it was on a background of black and glittering steel.

On foot were the Yaconins, all two-sworded men, and armed in addition with bows and arrows, as sure and formidable as those that won Crécy and Agincourt.

Our troops were drawn up on the right—a wall of massive men in scarlet—dwarfing the Japanese indeed in stature, but lamentably prosaic amid the old-world grace and splendour about them. There was a charge that I can never forget—armour clashing, swords glittering, and archers with bent bows and arrows on string. Our men loudly cheered it, and the applause was received with bent heads and profound respect. How unimaginable would have been the suggestion that we were beholding the fathers of the men by whom the mighty Russian Empire was to be defeated and abased! The irony of fate strikes one with awe and wonder.

A few days later we were sent as senior officer to Nagasaki, relieving Captain Courtney of the *Scylla*.

On our arrival, information having reached me that Prince Choshiu was re-arming his batteries at Simonosaki, we received orders to proceed there and ascertain the facts.

The tide was against us when we reached Simonosaki, and, with a full head of steam, we failed to stem it, and were swerved round against our helm toward some outlying rocks. We had, however, just time to drop the anchor, and it held until slack water, when we weighed, and finally anchored in the well-known spot whence we had rescued the *Perseus*.

Landing, we made a minute inspection of the batteries. Not much had been done beyond a general

clear up and the repair of some traverses, and we therefore anchored off the town of Simonosaki, awaiting the arrival of an officer sent by Prince Choshiu.

When he came he proved to be an extremely intelligent young fellow, speaking English perfectly, and entirely equal to that or any other situation.

I suggested that Prince Choshiu had not literally observed his treaty with the Allies; but he negatived this at once, assuring me that he could explain any doubtful matter, if I would make a second inspection in his company. This I did, and he was extremely fluent in pointing out how immaterial were any changes I had noticed. But the cat was visible in the bag when he told me that his master had been threatened by his brother Daimios of Buzen, Satsuma, and Higo, and had resolved to fight them. I had seen two steamers flying the Japanese flag with Prince Satsuma's badge in a bay on the opposite side of the straits, and had noticed that one was full of Yaconins and the other of military stores.

Having a friend with me who could speak the language, I thought it the best course to send him to these steamers to investigate, and this I did, with an officer carrying a courteous message to the Japanese. But all the ladders were triced up, and an ordinary Yaconin standing on the gangway informed my friend with the utmost courtesy that "the officers were on shore, and there was no one on board qualified to receive such honourable visitors"—a notable instance of a diplomatic secrecy which is a part of the national character. I did not attempt to enforce civilities, but returned to Simonosaki, sorry enough for poor Choshiu, who since the destruction of his defences found himself between the devil and the deep sea.

We were detained several days salving a large English steamer which had got on the rocks. It was a successful job, and we brought her to Nagasaki in safety, where we were awarded handsome salvage.

Amongst the many interesting sights in Nagasaki, I thought the most remarkable was the steam factory on the north side of the harbour; for here was sown the seed which forty years later was to produce an iron-clad exceeding our own *Dreadnought* in tonnage. The factory had been started some three years before, under the superintendence of Dutch engineers—in fact, immediately after intercourse with Europeans had begun—and now as I looked at the almost complete machinery and workshops there was much to reflect upon.

I saw a Nasmyth hammer, iron-turning lathes, furnaces, docks and slips, and every requisite, and I could not but contrast it with the apathy of the Chinese, who had known us so long, but had assimilated so little. I wondered, but little foresaw, where it would all lead Already the workmen had constructed steam-engines and tubular boilers, and fitted them to good-sized boats; and as another sign of the deadly earnest that possessed them, I was told that among the artificers were sons of the greatest families working side by side with the ordinary mechanics, and thus anticipating our own Osborne by forty years. Step by step they were learning their business, and although Nagasaki was not to be the Portsmouth of Japan, it was here most assuredly that the foundations of their great navy were laid deep and strong.

I was invited to witness the launch of the biggest ship yet constructed, and they made it a great festival. It was only a schooner, built for an English firm and measuring 260 tons, but all the foreign officers, the

merchants, and the Japanese officials were assembled, with champagne and refreshments in abundance, while Mrs. Alt, a delightfully pretty Englishwoman, performed the naming ceremony. The dog-shores were knocked away, and the little craft started handsomely; but the ways had been laid in soft mud, and, to the intense mortification of the Japanese, she stuck, until a channel had been cut to float her. It was the day of small things.

Time flew rapidly at Nagasaki. There were Russian, French, and Dutch men-of-war, as well as our own, and national entertainments were given on board, and responded to by the merchants in the same style. It was on these occasions that the Japanese officials sometimes forgot their Oriental dignity, and, gathering up their stately robes, would pirouette on the decks, showing their sandalled shoes like a girl in a ball-room. I myself once indulged in such a dance with my good friend the Governor of Nagasaki. It was rare fun, and we both enjoyed it; but I learnt afterwards, to my great regret, that some malicious person had reported the circumstance to the Yeddo Government, and my worthy partner had been reprimanded for what was considered an extremely dangerous innovation, and was in any case an infringement of Japanese dignity.

By this time we who had been in the Simonosaki action were expecting to hear what the Admiralty thought of the affair. The news arrived on January 22, 1865. We were at church service when the mail came on board, and as I reached the quarter-deck the officer of the watch said: "Allow me to congratulate you, sir, on being made a post-captain."

I had not allowed myself to think it likely, and now

it had come it seemed too good to be true. I was but thirty-four, and imagined great things in the future —so happily hidden from us all. Six weeks later my successor joined. But before leaving Nagasaki, amongst the kindest of farewells was that of my old friend Hatori Sayemonosaki, the Governor, who asked me to a dinner, which, except for the champagne, was given in the old Japanese style. I need not describe what is now so well known, but the dinner over and cigarettes lit, the Governor placed a beautiful breech-loading Winchester rifle in my hands. I glanced at his face, and saw there was an ulterior object in the gift, and observing that the name "Winchester" on the lock was evidently engraved by unaccustomed hands, I remarked: "Your Excellency has done well in manufacturing so perfect a lock for this rifle."

With huge delight he then informed me that lock, stock and barrel had all been made by Japanese workmen, and his request was that on returning to England I would particularly mention this circumstance to my Queen. I told him this was impossible, but that it should be fully reported to the Admiralty as the first rifle manufactured wholly in Japan.

I took passage in a merchant steamer to Hong Kong, and in heavy weather met with (for the first and last time in my sea-life) the electric spark known as St. Elmo's lights. It played round our mastheads, both of which were fitted with lightning conductors, and it was strangely beautiful to see the tiny balls of fire, sometimes fluttering, sometimes settling. The officers did not discriminate between St. Elmo's lights and the ignis fatuus, and, I rather believe, logged it as the latter.

At Malta I found Goodenough in command of the

magnificent *Victoria*, of 130 guns. She was the last wooden three-decker to carry an admiral's flag at sea, and alongside her lay the first of our ironclads, ponderous, ugly, and heavily masted, but capable of making matchwood of the stately *Victoria* in five minutes—a fact which Goodenough fully realised.

At the Admiralty I redeemed my promise to the Governor of Nagasaki, but I do not recall that any interest was taken in the information. Their Lordships gave me an abundance of fair words, but nothing else, and for nearly seven years I remained, as far as the service was concerned, on a half-pay of 10s. 6d. a day.

CHAPTER XXIII

SIX YEARS' HALF-PAY (1864-1870)

"Where the huge Atlantic swings heavy water eastward,
Ireland, square to meet it, shoulders off the seas:
Wild are all her coasts with stress of cliff and billow,
On her northern moorland is little sheltered ease."

STEPHEN GWYNN.

IN 1864, of 380 captains on the Active List, barely 100 were actually employed; thus the prospect of long unemployment had to be faced, and the great object being to keep, if possible, in touch with naval life, I obtained permission to accompany the Channel Fleet on a visit to Cherbourg and Brest.

Captain Vansittart received me most courteously on board the *Achilles*, then the finest ironclad in the service, though still fully rigged as a sailing-ship; but the majority of the fleet were wooden screw-ships, nearly all exercises having reference to fighting actions under canvas or by ramming. A little later the *Royal Sovereign* joined—an old three-decker cut down, armour-plated, mastless, and fitted with two revolving turrets carrying heavy guns. We inspected her, and came away, saying, "She must supersede every other type of war-vessel," and so it has proved. But the mast and sails were to die hard, and for twenty years more they held their own.

At Brest, as at Cherbourg, fêtes were the order of the day, crowned by a magnificent ball on board the

Ville de Lyons. And after the ladies had departed the French officers adjourned to our ships, and celebrated the occasion by so many bumpers to our eternal friendship that it became a hospitable necessity to secure some of them in the midshipmen's hammocks.

The cruise over, as an old gunnery officer, I reflected on the rapid successive changes in this department of our work, and wrote to Captain Key (commanding the *Excellent*) on the subject. He advised me to join and go through the course for a modern gunnery officer, pointing out that one captain on half-pay had already done this, and had been rewarded by early employment.

The Admiralty, at Captain Key's request, gave the necessary order, and apportioned to me the magnificent sum of eighteenpence a day as subsistence money. Thus I began a hard grind of eight months side by side with the candidates for gunnery lieutenancies, and received in the end a first-class certificate in all subjects, becoming a marksman and head of my company at the Hythe course.

Captain Key was well pleased, for that the higher ranks of naval officers should thus employ their half-pay time was his pet project, and he wrote to their Lordships urging the advisability of my being rewarded with an active appointment, if only to encourage the others.

His letter was merely acknowledged, and so, after long intervals, were two more, and I then realised that I had laboured in vain. Fortunately, however, I got work as a marine surveyor on the wild western coast of Ireland, and was thus relieved of the abhorrent idleness, whilst these trips were full of interest and adventure, and added much that was valuable and unusual to my naval experience.

I never knew a case when a ship had once struck those iron rocks that she did not become a total wreck, and every such event was a godsend to the coast dwellers, for they invariably regarded the cargoes as honest spoil, and, indeed, a sea harvest as naturally to be expected as the land one. The first care, therefore, always was to procure a guard of constabulary or coastguardsmen to protect the flotsam and jetsam. I remember on one occasion, in January, 1868, during the night intelligence reached me that a great American liner (the *Chicago*) was on shore off Guileen, a few miles to the east of Ballycotton Lighthouse.

It was blowing a frightful gale from the south-west, and, besides nearly 100 passengers and a general cargo, there was a large consignment of specie on board. My first step was to lay the case before the admiral at Queenstown, and to request that a guard of marines might be sent to protect the specie in case it could be landed. It was a case of urgent necessity.

In the early hours of a winter morning he promptly ordered an officer and twenty men to accompany me, and crossing Queenstown Harbour in a tug, we got a preliminary sousing before landing at Aghada, whence we drove on cars to Guileen.

There lay the doomed ship, on the rocks of as wild a coast as fancy could conceive, the great seas breaking over her mastheads. The passengers had been safely landed by the coastguardsmen, but already the cargo was washing out of the holds and strewing the coast for miles, and, do what we would, the natives were plundering right and left.

However, the specie was still on board, and the agents of the company authorised me to survey the

vessel and land it, so that by means of the lines by which the passengers had escaped I made my way to the deck. It was a strange and ghastly scene. The captain and a few others were still on board, sheltering under the seaward bulwarks, and when the great seas struck her iron sides she shuddered and groaned as if in her last agony, whilst through the torn and rent holds the water rushed in a black whirlpool. The specie was aft, in one of the state rooms, packed in strong deal boxes weighing about 20 pounds each; so we set to work at once, and slinging them in bags, got them safely on shore, abandoning the unfortunate *Chicago* for the wild waves to deal with as they would —and cruel indeed were the tender mercies to which we left her.

Meantime, Lord Fermoy, whose beautiful place, Rostellan, was only a few miles off, had received all the distressed passengers, and treated them with genuine Irish hospitality. I called on them to ask if I could be of any service. They were nearly all Yankees, and one regular old Down-Easter voiced the general opinion when he told me: "Waal, sir, I never set eyes on a lord before, and I guessed they were a mean lot; but if this lord ain't a *man*, snakes ain't snakes."

He might well say so, for the Lord Fermoy of that day was both physically and mentally one of the finest men in the country, as his wife was one of the handsomest women. Most of the passengers slept there that night, and between sheets that, as they were told, had cost £200 a pair. Alas! it was true, for Lord Fermoy, amongst the many improvements he had tried to introduce in the South of Ireland, had taken up the growth and manufacture of flax. It proved a failure,

and so it came about that the linen sheets, its only remainder, had cost exactly the sum named.

The gold ingots from the *Chicago* were, however, still lying on the beach, guarded by marines, and the next anxiety was to get them safely to London. Finally, it was settled that I, accompanied by four trustworthy men, should take them by way of Dublin, thus avoiding the heavy freight charged by rail and steamship companies. We took them on cars to Cork, and in a first-class carriage kept anxious watch and ward until we reached Westland Row Station, and thence got them safely on board the Holyhead boat. By some unlucky mischance, however, a suspicion got about that our plain deal boxes did not contain ordinary merchandise, and the captain of the steamer came to me requesting that he might be informed as to their contents. Having ascertained their value, he absolutely refused to allow them to be landed at Holyhead until I had given him my note-of-hand for £600.

Here was a fix. I rapidly revolved the possibilities of the situation, and it immediately occurred to me that the Superintendent of Mail Steamers was the captain's superior officer, and that my chance lay with him. I also remembered that this official was an old navigating officer who had served under my father, and was deeply imbued with all the respect due to superior naval rank. Accordingly at his door I knocked at four o'clock in the wintry morning, and demanded to see him on urgent business. Nobody's temper could be expected to be on show at such an hour, and as the old gentleman had been sitting up late for his daughters, who were at a dance, his was none of the sweetest. He flatly refused to see me, and I, entrenching myself on a chair, as flatly refused

to depart unseen. Time went by, and, realising my determination, he thought better of his decision, and shuffled down in dressing-gown and slippers to mistake me for a bank-clerk, and to bid me very abruptly go back and pay up the money, "or not a box should leave the ship."

I opened my masked battery on this, and informed him that I was Captain Moresby, and that I thought he had much better hear my view of the case before he decided it. A flow of cordiality resulted. "God bless my soul, sir! why didn't you say so before? I beg your pardon. And are you the son of my old chief? Let me hear what you have to say, by all means."

He listened most attentively, and finally agreed that I should proceed with the specie to London if I gave him a promise to pay all legal dues to the Mail Steamship Company when called upon. The skipper of the steamer was compelled to obey the order, but as no sentiment coloured his views he did it with much unwillingness, muttering: "I'm blessed if I would let it go. A bird in the hand is a jolly sight better than two in the bush."

Sleeplessly I guarded the boxes in the train, and at Euston quietly slipped the specie into three cabs, so that by 11 a.m. it was safely deposited in the bank, amid the warm congratulations of the managers. I was wearied out—indeed, exhausted—with anxiety and want of sleep, but the handsome reward I received made ample amends. The claim of the Mail Steamship Company for freight was not sustained, and thinking of my old friend at Holyhead, I could not help feeling some regrets.

Five years' work on that storm-beaten coast gave me experience in a branch of sea-life unknown to me before, and happily rare in the naval service.

I saw that saddest of all sad sights, the crew of a lost ship appealing for help that no human hand could give, and watched the struggle with feelings that cannot be told, until a mighty wave swept like doom over all, and the sea laid the scarred and mutilated bodies at our feet for the only care in our power.

Sometimes—and, if possible, even more piteous—as in the case of the *Edina* barque in Clonakilty Bay, there were women also. The captain and his young wife were washed on shore together, and we laid them to rest side by side in Timoleague Churchyard. In all such cases the innate refinement and sensitiveness of the Irish nature was very marked, and in no gentler nor more reverent hands could Death lay his cruel harvest. Use never made them callous to that tragedy.

Experience taught me that the best way to protect the interests of owners and to save plunder was to offer a fair remuneration in money down for cargo saved. No men better understand nor hold to a bargain than the Irish peasants. I have been lowered by ropes over ragged cliffs amongst scores of these ignorant and excitable men with as much as £300 in my pocket—unimaginable wealth to them. Nothing would have been easier than to have given me a shove on the slippery rocks and eased me of my life, as well as my money; but I was safer than in Pall Mall, when, amid the roaring of wind and waves, I paid each man his agreed share for the salvage work, and saw it received with perfect contentment.

The heaviest gale I ever witnessed on the Irish coast was on December 30, 1869. Two ships were in distress off Ballycotton. Both ran for the bay, and as I arrived one managed to haul up under the lee of the island and anchored, her crew being taken off by the

lifeboat. The other failed, and let go her anchor, exposed to the full force of the boiling caldron of waters dashing their spray 80 feet high over the lighthouse For a moment she swung to her anchor, and the next, engulfed by a tremendous wave, she instantly disappeared, no vestige remaining. The suddenness was frightful; it seemed incredible, and for the moment more than reason could grasp. On the following day the storm had fled to other lands, and the waters of the bay were calm and unruffled, while far beneath the keel of the whale-boats plying busily up and down could be seen the quiet hull of the unknown ship, seemingly quivering in the distorted light of the bright depths. The terror was over, and she lay there re-absorbed into the beauty of Nature—a strange and touching sight.

But life in Ireland is never devoid of the humorous element, and I had my full share. In the year 1869, when the destructive properties of nitro-glycerine were first publicly discussed, it became my duty to survey a damaged ship laden with casks of glycerine. For purposes of repair I directed a portion of the cargo to be landed and stored, and thought no more about it. What was my astonishment next day to find the whole town (Queenstown) in a panic, and to be informed that every life was in danger from the deadly compound stored under one of the principal offices in the place. The Town Council assembled, and sent their health officer to stop all discharge of cargo and to remove the vessel to the outer anchorage; and the people gathered at the street corners in agitated crowds to meet their doom in comfortable companionship. I vainly contended that it could be nothing but pure glycerine. "Pure glycerine, is it?" said the

chairman. "Well, there's mighty little difference between pure glycerine and impure glycerine, and the ship must be off before we have the place blown about our ears." All I could say was: "Well, gentlemen, if it is nitro-glycerine, a blow will explode it. There can be no doubt of that. I propose that a cask should be put in a field and I will fire a shot at it. Will this satisfy you?"

After much deliberation this handsome offer was accepted, on condition that the naval authorities would undertake the experiment, and the admiral's consent was obtained.

I shall never forget that procession, nor the agonised countenances of the bearers who lifted the cask on to a cart as softly padded for its reception as if it had been an invalid in the last stages of disease. "Patsy and Jim Dempsey had great courage entirely!" was the comment of the crowd, standing at what they fondly believed to be a safe distance, and thence exhorting and applauding the victims of official orders; and a sigh of relief ran through the assemblage as the cart moved off at a funeral pace, the procession falling in behind, and an advance guard of barelegged urchins tearing on in front to gather any untimely stones out of the way. Every rut, every jerk sent a sympathetic spasm through each bosom, including the municipal ones, for the Town Council also followed to see the catastrophe.

We wended our way into the country, attended by the prayers and blessings of all the old women of both sexes whom we met *en route*, and the gilded pinnacle was put on the terror when, in lifting the cask into the field (far from all human habitation), one of the bearers stumbled and almost fell, turning a face of wan appeal to heaven as he recovered himself.

But we got it there. The barrel stood in stately solitude in the midst of an enormous field, and everyone scattered to right and left like a covey of partridges, whilst the flag-lieutenant, with desperate gallantry, took aim at about 600 yards' distance. I can still recall the Town Council crouching among the brambles of a distant hedge, and watching with expectant eyes and a manifest intention of instant flight. The fourth shot hit the cask fair and square, and, amidst an awful silence, a few slow tears of glycerine oozed out and trickled down its side. And that was all.

The city fathers were still unconvinced. They complained that a leaden bullet might fail where an iron bullet would have done the trick; but there was really no more to be said, and it was a rollicking crowd that returned to Queenstown (behind a barrel that was jolted at a hard gallop over a road of hills and hollows), to ridicule everyone who had shown the faintest sign of alarm.

I remember another curious incident in Ireland. Some years before, when as a lieutenant I had been attached to the Channel Fleet, we anchored in the Shannon, and I, with an old messmate, John McKie, made an expedition to Scattery Island to see the round tower and the seven churches so famous in legend. The most ancient ruin (which had been fitted up as a chapel) was protected by a high wall and locked iron gate; nor could we find anyone who could give us access, the islanders being evidently loath that Protestants should profane the enclosure by their presence. Nothing daunted, we rather unwisely prepared to scale the wall, and choosing a spot where on the inside a young ash-tree had grown up, we were quickly on top and beginning to descend by the tree. I landed

safely, but McKie was heavier; a branch snapped, and he fell to the ground with a broken leg. A great commotion was the result. The gate was flung open, and the islanders rushed in to rejoice over the miracle. "Glory be to God!" they said. "'Tis St. Patrick can protect his own. Lave him alone for that!" However, they helped me to carry poor McKie to our boat, and the incident passed from my mind. In February, 1869, I was at Kilkee looking after a wreck, and having a spare afternoon, I crossed to Scattery in one of the native coracles: a form of boat probably little changed since the Neolithic Age—in fact, a cockleshell made of wicker and covered with canvas or hide. Landing on the island, I found the tree from which John McKie had broken his leg, now eclipsing all other objects in interest, if not veneration. "Step this way, yer honour. Them's the branches where the blessed saint stud and cursed the black Protestant that was breaking in. And wasn't every bone in his body broke? Glory be to God for that same!"

There was much more, and it was an excellent demonstration of the gradual accretion of myth. I did not reveal my identity, but I departed more than ever convinced of the width of the gulf that separates the Celtic mental processes from the Saxon. They may be better; they may be worse—far be it from me to pronounce—but they are, at all events, utterly and completely different.

In 1870, being still unemployed, I had another cruise with the Channel Fleet. All six ships were ironclads, but being fully masted and rigged, more importance was still attached to speed under canvas than under steam. It was too absurd to witness the serious consideration allotted to a speed of five or six knots before

a fresh gale. So with the gunnery. The target chosen for the ships was nothing less than the Bull and Calf Rocks, at a little more than point-blank range, and there was much congratulation on the excellent practice made. For aught I know, Sir Percy Scott may have been a midshipman in one of the ships, and if so he may contrast these rock targets at 600 yards with his evolution of gun practice at a target 20 feet square at six miles.

On June 15, 1871, I was appointed to command H.M.S. *Basilisk*, and entered upon the most notable part of my naval career.

CHAPTER XXIV

H.M.S. "BASILISK"

"There the black slave-ship swims,
Freighted with human forms,
Whose fettered, fleshless limbs
Are not the sport of storms.

"These are the bones of slaves;
They gleam from the abyss;
They cry, from yawning waves,
'We are the witnesses!'"

LONGFELLOW.

ON January 23, 1871, I hoisted the pennant on board H.M.S. *Basilisk* for the service on the Australian Station. She was an old-fashioned paddler of 1,071 tons, 400 horse-power, with 5 guns, and manned by 178 officers and men. Properly speaking, she was a commander's command; but after the first feeling of disappointment at her insignificance, somewhat lessened by her previous captain having been that distinguished officer Sir William Hewett, I reflected that not only was the Australian one of the most interesting stations under our flag, but also it offered possibilities of exploration and discovery not to be met with elsewhere in this well-surveyed world.

Pondering thus, I went to the Hydrographer of the Navy, Admiral Sir George Richards, to discuss with him the prospect which had occurred to me of adding to our hydrographical knowledge, and, assuring him

that I should lose no possible opportunities, I begged he would supply me with a small outfit of surveying instruments. It was a most unusual request, but he received it kindly, and gave the necessary order, and I was thus provided with an azimuth pocket-compass and the other necessary articles. I looked over my prizes eagerly, wondering whether, after all, their use would justify the confidence of the hydrographer. This in truth was the impetus which led to the last extensive maritime discoveries possible between the Arctic and Antarctic circles—in other words, the exploration of some 600 miles in and out of the then unvisited coast of New Guinea, and the addition to the chart of 140 islands and islets (25 of which were inhabited), besides the discovery of Port Moresby, now the capital of New Guinea, and many other excellent harbours and anchorages, all eventually resulting in the addition of the colony of New Guinea to the Empire.

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends." I had occasion to realise that fact through the whole of this strangely unforeseen commission, which yet is the part of my naval career that I can reflect upon with truest satisfaction.

A fine body of seamen and petty officers was drafted to the *Basilisk*, and ten days later I reported the ship ready for sea—a change, indeed, from the four months or more required to collect a ship's company under the old system.

On February 13 we sailed from Plymouth on our long voyage, and as soon as we cleared the Channel I took the floats off the paddle-wheels, and so converted her into a sailing vessel pure and simple. I thought she might thus do fairly well, and I was not altogether

disappointed, for although no clipper, yet of the 73,915 nautical miles we were destined to cover before the pennant came down, no less than 46,106 were done under sail alone, and 27,509 under both, or with steam only.

When nearing the Cape there occurred to me one of those rare experiences of the exact realisation of a dream, of which we have as yet no explanation. I dreamed that Mr. B—— was officer of the afternoon watch, when I came on deck, and looking round, observed a foreign man-of-war close at hand, which had not been duly reported. Such a flagrant neglect of duty on the part of Mr. B—— called for severe reprimand; but he assured me he had not seen her, nor had the look-out man, until I drew attention to the stranger. The next morning I told the first lieutenant my dream, and then it passed from my mind, and I thought of it no more. Yet that very afternoon it was completely fulfilled. I came on deck—Mr. B—— was officer of the watch—and looking round, I saw, about four miles off, a large frigate, of which no notice had been taken—a Dutchman bound for the Cape. Naturally Mr. B—— came in for a tremendous wigging, and his excuses were exactly those of my dream. Not till my indignation had cooled did it occur to me how exactly its previsions had been fulfilled.

A few days at the Cape, and then we sailed south to pick up the brave Westerlies in the roaring forties. We got them with a vengeance, and under close-reefed topsails and reefed foresail, our yards martingaled down and secured with burtons, we fled eastward, the great seas chasing us, towering high as our main-top, as we sank in the abyss between them; but we always obeyed their impulse buoyantly, and swept upwards

into safety once more. One mighty wave did strike us, and left its mark. We were battened down, and when the deluge of water had freed itself, we found our port paddle-wheel had practically disappeared, and bits of the iron framing alone were left.

Then followed a few hours' calm, surrounded by great whales and a swooping, chattering crowd of albatrosses, Cape hens, Cape petrels, and the many other denizens of high southern latitudes, as they fought for the odds and ends that floated astern. Alas! many of these beautiful creatures paid the penalty of making our acquaintance, for their skins were in high demand. Our good doctor was, however, a merciful man, and as each bird was drawn inboard he placed a few grains of strychnine on its tongue, and in a short minute all was over.

Then, with a fresh hand at the brave Westerlies, the old craft staggered on again, and on June 4 we anchored in Melbourne Harbour, thirty-six days from the Cape, having averaged 180 miles a day, under canvas the whole time. Very good going! My orders were to proceed to Sydney, but with only one paddle-wheel I thought the risk too great on a possible lee shore. The Commodore at Sydney thought otherwise, and ordered me to proceed without repairs, and we consequently had the narrowest possible shave of being wrecked in Bass's Straits. When we reached Sydney and my chief saw how seriously we were crippled, he acknowledged his error, but he never forgot it, nor possibly, human nature being what it is, forgave me for its occasion. Indeed, to my indignation, he excused it by saying, "I thought the attractions of Melbourne had taken you there!"

Having refitted, our first employment was as senior

officer in New Zealand, and whilst there, on many excursions I made my first acquaintance with the Polynesian in the noblest of his races—the Maori. They kept at that time their ancient dress and customs practically unaltered, in spite of their readiness to appreciate and profit by the just and conciliatory nature of the British rule, and it was a singularly interesting circumstance, at the opening of the Parliament at Wellington, to see the Maori chiefs representing their people side by side with the British, and receiving from the Governor the same impartial attention.

Before returning to Sydney we had one very narrow escape from shipwreck in the French Pass, where, by a miscalculation, we met an opposing tide when too late to turn back. However, being obliged to face it, we got safely through that narrow rocky gut eventually —a feat which no other ship had ever accomplished against an adverse tide.

January, 1872, saw us back at Sydney, with orders to proceed to Cape York, in Torres Straits, and to spend three months on the cruise.

At Brisbane I received every kindness from the Governor of Queensland, Lord Normanby, and had the advantage of his remarkable foresight where Australian affairs were concerned; and of this I stored up every word, hoping to turn it to good account as opportunity offered.

Leaving Brisbane and passing inside the great Barrier Reef, where even with modern charts it is difficult enough to navigate this intricate ocean byway, I realised to the full the skill and resolution of its first explorer, Captain Cook—for although, unless a strong monsoon is blowing, the sailor moves inside



Moresby.

this mighty breakwater on a summer sea of translucent waters, whilst he sees the surf and hears the roar of the Pacific thundering against its everlasting walls, yet it is a seaway of extraordinary difficulty and anxiety.

On February 5 we were slipping through a sea like glass, and watching the great water-snakes at play on the surface, all of us languid from the heat, when a sail right ahead was reported, and waked us up in a moment—the event was so rare. There was something puzzling about the slovenly set of her sails, and she had, we thought, a water-logged look as she swayed in the undulations of the sea. Indeed, there were signs of strange neglect in the slackened ropes as we neared her, and not a soul was stirring on board. Just as we were thinking her abandoned, two or three wild figures rose in the stern, and then we could see that others lay on the deck as if asleep. The first lieutenant and the gunner, in two boats, boarded her, and these men pointed muskets at them over the side. But what men! living skeletons rather, dazed with mortal fear and weakness. As our men gained the deck, the half-dead wretches tottered to their feet, fumbling at rusty lockless muskets, and making a miserable attempt at self-defence—a terrible and pitiful sight. We disarmed them gently. They were dreadful to look at—in the last stage of famine, wasted to the bone; and the sleeping figures were dead men, fast losing the semblance of humanity on a deck foul with blood.

We tried to show our peaceable intention, and when we gave them water, it was awful to see their eagerness; but help came too late for one, and even as we succoured him, the dark Melanesian soul passed away from the outrage of man to the mercy of God.

There was neither water nor food on board, nor even a boat; the hold was full of the sea, and the ransacked cabin, the blood, the planking scarred by axe-strokes, all told of a tragedy. Our next care was to pump out the hold and to bury the dead. The bodies were separately wrapped in decent canvas and weighted (insufficiently, as it proved), and then the pumps ceased clanging on board the *Peri*, and our men stood bare-headed as an officer read the words that committed them to the deep. The poor remnants of humanity, when launched overboard, did not sink, but floated away beyond our sight, mute witnesses of a burning wrong.

The story proved to be this: A noted kidnapping vessel, the *Nukulow*, had brought some 180 kidnapped natives to Fiji, where they were hired out to planters at the rate of £15 a head, paid to the owners of the *Nukulow*. About eighty of these were transferred to the *Peri* for conveyance to various islands of the Fiji group, in charge of three white men and a Fijian crew. On getting to sea, one of the white men was heartless enough to throw overboard the small allowance of rice apportioned to the natives, and with all their wild natures stirred to madness and terror, they mutinied, and threw the white men and Fijians overboard; and then, left to themselves, helpless and starving, they drifted for five weeks before the South-East Trades, accomplishing a distance of about 1,800 miles, and passing through one of the narrow openings of the Barrier Reef, with only thirteen survivors.

We took them to Cardwell, then the most northerly point of civilisation in Queensland, and eventually they were restored to their various islands in one of Her Majesty's ships—with what a tale to carry home, what

seeds of hatred and distrust of the white man to sow!

Cardwell was surrounded by various tribes of aborigines, and these, naturally regarding the men who were rapidly dispossessing them as mortal enemies, showed their resentment in murder and outrage, and met with terrible retaliation at the hands of our countrymen. Native troopers, commanded by white men, were employed to hunt down and destroy the offenders—a policy which later on was to produce a disastrous harvest. Truly the dark places of the earth are full of cruelty, and the cost of an Empire's expansion, with its tribute of blood and tears, is concealed except from those who keep watch and ward upon its outposts.

The cost is terrible: the results should be noble indeed if any balance is to be struck with the long processes of the eternal justice.

CHAPTER XXV

H.M.S. "BASILISK"—*continued*

"There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled and wrought and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine and opposed—
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old."

TENNYSON.

ON February 16 we reached our destination, Cape York, and anchored off the settlement of Somerset.

This extreme northern point of Queensland was first settled in 1866, with the hope that from its geographical position it would become another Singapore in importance. These anticipations have not been realised. We found but six white settlers—the Government Police Magistrate and his boat's crew—and some twenty native troopers.

Our orders permitted only three days' stay at Somerset, and Torres Straits, then practically unsurveyed, lay before us. A shipwreck had occurred on an uncharted rock, lying directly in the channel recommended through the Straits, and I was anxious to give the hydrographer some proof that he had not granted me surveying instruments for nothing. Besides, the pearl-shelling and bêche-de-mer stations on lonely islands had never been visited by any man-of-war, and many evil reports reached me of the illegal detention of the

native divers, and other such iniquities. The ship was refitting, and I therefore determined on a boat expedition. Placing the first lieutenant (Hayter) in charge of a hired boat belonging to the police magistrate, I took charge of our pinnace, having with me Navigating Lieutenant Mourilyan and Mr. Mudge, the boatswain.

On February 18 we entered Torres Straits, and stood north under sail, and as night wore heavy weather came on, with squalls of unexpected fury. A blinding downpour of rain and confused sea made our position a trying one, and we could not even keep the binnacle light burning. I had many an anxious thought for our safety and that of the other boat, for we were surrounded by reefs and rocks. At daybreak a white squall, looking as innocent as a babe after the black ones, came whistling and seething upon us, and in a moment we were dismasted—a promising beginning. After this it cleared a bit, and we made out our position no less than twelve miles to leeward of what we had supposed. In our disabled condition there was nothing for it but to jury-rig the boat and put about. A fearful afternoon followed, during which that fine seaman Mr. Mudge showed his quality, as he was to do on many future occasions.

At sunset the wind fell, and we managed to get rest and shelter under the lee of a small island. We roused up early, and after morning prayer and a breakfast of biscuit with a glass of rum-and-water, we started for the ship. During a lift in the weather we caught sight of Hayter's boat and he of us, and this wrung a hearty cheer from both crews. The *Basilisk* was a welcome sight, for I had felt grave doubts of ever putting my men aboard her again. And so ended my

first acquaintance with Torres Straits, which we were afterwards to know so intimately.

I had now to consider how far I should be justified in risking Her Majesty's ship without authority in the dangerous navigation I had experienced, especially as two years before H.M.S. *Blanche* had been almost totally wrecked on a coral reef a few miles from Cape York. I should have, besides, to leave the limits of the Australian Station, and enter those of the China Station. It received the most anxious reflection. However, I finally decided to incur the responsibility with a full sense of its weight, knowing that if the risk was great, so also were the prizes of future safety for the navigator, and of commercial possibilities for the Empire, though I was then far from being in a position to estimate the results that would eventually follow my determination.

Torres Straits is about 200 miles long, with a least breadth of eighty miles between Cape York and the opposing coast of New Guinea, and the entire area is strewn with coral reefs, sand-banks, and islands.

Through these a tolerably safe channel had been sounded out, but the islands adjacent to the New Guinea coast did not even appear on the chart, and the difficulties of navigation may therefore be imagined. We left Somerset and anchored near Saddle Island, about twenty miles from Cape York, and for two days searched for the dangerous rock I have mentioned. We had almost given up the quest, when Sub-Lieutenant Jones in the little dinghy suddenly hoisted the ensign, and the prize was our own. The satisfaction we felt in unmasking a hidden foe was one that all sailors will understand, and we immediately anchored the dinghy over the rock, and taking a round

of bearings, fixed its position, for the first time using the surveying instruments accorded me by the hydrographer. And for a useful purpose, for this rock, but 6 feet under water, rises only half a mile from the track taken by vessels traversing the Straits.

A few hours afterwards we passed the limits of the Australian Station, and entered the unsurveyed waters off the New Guinea coast, with a deep anxiety on my part that the assumption of such a responsibility might be justified by success. As we neared the Brothers Island—a large pearl-shelling station—we fell in with an unknown reef, and having surveyed it, named it after our navigating lieutenant—Mourilyan. We then began our investigation of the system of employing native labour by the pearl-shellers—a most important problem.

Though pearls are found, and sometimes of considerable value, yet this rich sea-harvest is not worked for the sake of the jewels, but only for the mother-of-pearl oyster, the shell of which brings some £180 per ton. This great trade, now in the hands of large owners, and with every modern appliance for capturing the oyster at a depth of perhaps 18 fathoms, was at the time of our visit bounded by the endurance of the South Sea Islanders, who, diving from large boats, could just manage to bring up the shell from 5 or 6 fathoms.

I need not repeat the oft-told tale of the cruel wrongs inflicted upon these natives by the white men, who enticed them from their homes with false promises of short service and good wages, and kept them for years in slavery, attended at times with atrocities which it blanches the cheek and makes the blood run cold to remember. Many of these dark stories the

Basilisk brought to light, and, as I have narrated in former writings, she did her part in attacking this "fortressed wrong."

Whilst thus engaged, the attraction of gaining fresh hydrographical knowledge was strong upon us. Due north of the "Brothers," the high peak of Cornwallis Island could be seen, about twenty miles off, and sometimes, when raised by the mirage, the low wooded outline of Saibai Island, uncharted and only recently noted by the pearl-shellers.

In the few days at our disposal all could not be visited. I made my choice for Warrior Island—a sand-bank on a coral reef not more than two miles in circumference, with a salt-water lagoon in the centre, and covered with scanty bush. Yet this inconsiderable spot was of greater importance than neighbouring islands twenty times its size, and the secret, as usual, lay in sea-power. For Warrior Island commands the fishing of the great coral reef that bears its name, and thus maintains a large population and many war canoes, which have proved a very aggressive navy. As I looked at these formidable vessels, 50 and 60 feet long, and the powerful crews, all armed with 6-foot bows, capable of sending the poisoned arrow to the mark at 80 yards, it was easy to understand the respect they commanded, and the position they secured for their owners.

The approach to these unsurveyed islands was difficult indeed, on account of the fierce tide-races which sweep through the narrow channels of the reefs.

Unaware of this peculiarity, we approached in fancied security, when we were suddenly swept close to an outlying spur of rock. The anchor was instantly let go, but the holding-ground was bad, and the tide

running so furiously that we dragged swiftly along the edge of the danger. Providentially, the current set parallel to the reef, and eventually swept us into quiet water. Our survey showed that we had been thus carried into a horseshoe curve, past which the body of the tide flowed without entering. The circumstance made very actual the responsibility I had undertaken.

I induced some of the bravest of the savages to come on board, and they stepped on our decks as frightened as sheep, and huddling together in much the same fashion; but a few trifling presents and our friendly ways soon reassured them. Desiring to impress them further, we put them on the bridge, and fired shot and shell for their benefit, until they screamed and shouted with amazement. Some stopped their ears and cowered, but the boldest stood up beside us and expressed their amazement and pleasure with a loud "Coo-ee," when they saw a column of spray flung up at 4,000 yards' distance.

After supplying them well with tobacco and biscuit, we sent them on shore, proud and happy, and the object of envy to those whose fears had kept them away; and from their intercourse with other tribes in the Straits, we hoped our display might afford some sort of protection to wrecked or isolated white men—a point which should always be kept in mind.

The survey of the Warrior Reef occupied our permitted time, and we returned south inside the Great Barrier Reef, visiting by the way Lizard Island, so called by Captain Cook. After some difficult climbing, I stood on its bare windy top and gazed on the scene which must have met the eyes of the great sailor 102 years before, thinking with fresh wonder of the skill and courage he had shown in matching his frail

and lonely barque against such odds. I do not think our country remembers as she should the debt of gratitude she owes to Cook for writing home-names on so large a portion of the map of the world, but I realised it to the full as I stood there and gazed upon the scene of his labours. A few miles from Lizard Island was Endeavour River, where he beached and repaired his ship. I had his picture of the place in my hand, and steered my boat to the exact spot. A few months later a report of gold, some 200 miles inland, brought a rush of settlers. A township, appropriately named after Cook, was planted at the entrance of the river, and in a year's time mustered a population of 10,000 people, with three banks, a daily paper, and all the appointments of a full-grown city, whilst a Doric column rivalling that of Trafalgar Square now stands on the lonely spot, where I saw the descendants of Cook's "kanguroos" roaming as undisturbed as when he first made them known to the world. So quickly do events succeed each other in these breathless times.

Reaching Cardwell on March 9, we learnt of a disastrous shipwreck.

Seventy-five spirited, hare-brained young men from Sydney had attempted a prospecting expedition to New Guinea. They clubbed together, bought a crazy old brig (the *Maria*) of 167 tons, and the natural result followed. She was wrecked on the Bramble Reef, about thirty miles from Cardwell, and the master, whose incapacity had caused the disaster, deserted the vessel before daybreak, taking six men with him in the best boat. Two rafts were hurriedly constructed, and barely launched when the vessel slipped off the reef and sank in deep water. Thirteen men gained one raft, twelve the other. The remaining small boat, with

four or five men, reached Cardwell two days later, and gave the intelligence.

Of course, assistance was at once sent to the wreck, but no traces of the rafts could be seen. However, I still entertained a hope, and determined to search in the *Basilisk*.

Calculating the effects of the winds and prevailing currents, I concluded that the rafts, unless stopped by some obstruction, would strike the mainland sixty or seventy miles north of Cardwell, and therefore I proceeded to Cooper's Point, and sent our boats north and south to examine the coast.

Our kindly paymaster, O'Neill, was the possessor of an excellent spy-glass, and as a matter of personal pride allowed nothing to escape his notice. He was standing on the bridge looking about, when suddenly he cried out:

"I see white men on the beach!" and our glasses, eagerly levelled, confirmed the intelligence.

I hurried into a boat, and taking food and wine, pulled rapidly in. As we neared, it was alarming to notice that the men seemed to have disappeared, and a number of blacks were standing in their place, and seeing this our men gave way with a will that sent the boat flying through the water. But just as we landed they rose into sight again: they had fallen on their knees behind a rock to give thanks to the Almighty for their deliverance.

Eight emaciated, half-naked creatures met us, and clasping our hands, told us that they were the only survivors of the thirteen on the larger raft. There was no need to dwell on their sufferings; their wasted, ulcerated bodies, and the feeble voices with which they tried to raise a cheer, told that we had only

reached them just in time. The wine revived them, and they were finally able to crawl along with us to the native camp, insisting that I must see how the black men had done their poor best to aid them.

In a lovely glen we came to the gun-yahs, or huts, standing in a cleared space surrounded by gigantic trees. They were oval, about 5 feet high, and 8 or 9 wide at their greatest diameter, being constructed of rows of long pliable canes, secured to the ground at one end, and bent in an arch towards each other till they met, and were tied together at the top, and thatched with palm leaves and bark. The unmarried girls had their own and much larger gun-yah.

In one of these huts the refugees had been lodged and precariously fed with wild fruits, crushed ants, and fish by the kindly blacks, whose diminutive size and skeleton bodies denoted their own hard struggle for existence. Their weapons and fishing gear were of the rudest kind—wooden spears and shields, and unwieldy wooden swords about 5 feet long and 4 inches broad, with a disproportionate handle not more than 3 inches in length. For fishing, they had lines of twisted fibre and hooks of hard wood, with funnel-shaped baskets for catching shrimps. They had indeed done what they could, and in the truest spirit of charity, giving of their poverty and toil.

After I had thanked these good fellows in pantomime as well as I was able, and sent them a large supply of biscuit and pork from the ship, the shipwrecked men and they said good-bye to one another in a manner more affecting than I could have imagined. The natives embraced the castaways, weeping bitterly, and stood grouped on the beach gazing long after our

receding boat. Yet these were the men that, in the vicinity of every English settlement, were shot down like dogs on the smallest provocation. The tale of the rescued men was horrible. For four days they had drifted on the raft, without a particle of food or a drop of water beyond what the rain supplied. Two died raving mad, two were drowned, and the rest were almost lifeless, when they were found by their black friends.

In the meantime our boats had discovered the remains of the smaller raft on the beach, not more than six miles from the larger, but separated from it by a good-sized navigable river, which had prevented (providentially, as it proved) any communication between the crews. This fine stream we named Gladys River. Further search showed that the survivors of the smaller raft had walked south, hoping to reach Cardwell, but meeting hostile natives (probably exasperated by ill-treatment), were all murdered. The master's boat landed south of Cardwell, and its crew met the same fate.

Thus ended this unfortunate attempt to reach New Guinea, but it taught me that Australian instinct was pointing to the possession of that great island, and was bound, after however many failures, to succeed.

During this search we fortunately discovered a useful harbour on the Queensland coast, sixty miles north of Cardwell, the existence of which previously had only been conjectured.

Lieutenant Mourilyan and I, passing in the galley between two headlands but 120 yards apart, could scarcely believe our eyes when we saw a land-locked sheet of water, apparently capable of holding hundreds of vessels, with a river falling into it. The *Basilisk*

was at once anchored in Mourilyan Harbour, as we named it; but further examination proved that, whilst there was anchorage for several large ships, there were many mud-banks, which, however, would be easy of removal by dredging as space was needed. At the south end of the harbour Moresby River empties itself —a stream of good width, with 7 feet over the bar at half-flood, and a depth of 8 to 12 feet for about fourteen miles above the harbour. It flows sluggishly between mangrove banks, but eventually opens out into rich land.

This harbour is now the seat of a small township, with wharves and a fair amount of trade. It is also connected with the fertile districts on the Johnston River to the north by a steam tramway.

With this important bit of hydrographical knowledge we reached Sydney on April 5, and were rewarded by their Lordships' approval of the manner and matter of our service, whilst both Sydney and Queensland also expressed their thanks.

CHAPTER XXVI

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—ISLAND CRUISE

"Last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart,
On us, on us the unswerving season smiles,
Who wonder 'mid our fern why men depart
To seek the Happy Isles!"

KIPLING.

IN May, 1872, we left Sydney to visit many groups of the South Sea Islands, with orders to check the kidnapping of natives, then so common. We went, like our predecessors, with eyes open to the crimes committed, but with hands tied as far as effective restraint was concerned. Still, there were possibilities of other service. It seemed that hydrographical knowledge might be somewhat increased, for one thing, and the pleasant prospect of a sight of some of the loveliest and least explored islands of the Pacific was irresistible to us all. Having provided beads, knives, and the usual articles for trade or barter with the islands, we left Sydney, and on May 26 reached Norfolk Island, formerly (as a convict colony) a very Inferno, but now the beautiful home of the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*. My father's name being deservedly dear to the islanders, they gathered in nearly their full numbers at Cascade Landing, and gave us an affectionate welcome. Shaggy ponies were provided and we climbed the steep hill by a rough bridle-path, when a ride of about three miles through a rich grazing

country brought us within view of the settlement. Here awaited us the still active pastor of the place—so well known to all visitors—the Rev. G. H. Nobbs; and whilst the officers and men were eagerly taken possession of by the various inhabitants, I became his guest.

So much has been written about Norfolk Island since its settlement by the best-known and gentlest-mannered of the Anglo-Polynesian races, that I will not add to it here except by saying that, though it is evident the passive virtues abound amongst the people, yet a development of mental muscle is needed to make them the strong-hearted and persevering settlers it is to be hoped they may become.

One day I spent at the Melanesian College, and I slept that night in the room that had been occupied by the lately martyred Bishop Patteson, and was still filled with his books and other such tokens of his saintly presence. As I lay down to sleep I remembered with gladness that our work of hunting down the kidnapping would avenge him in the way he would probably have chosen of all others.

We hoped next day to return on board, but a fierce gale sprang up, and so tremendous a sea was rolling in that embarkation could not be thought of. The ship, now flung up on a great wave, now lost to sight in a trough of the sea, had to put out for safety, leaving us all behind, and six days passed before she could make the island again. But for my anxiety about her nothing could have been pleasanter than the rides and walks and the evening amusements at the public room with the kindly islanders.

Visiting the burial-ground with Mr. Nobbs, I noticed tombstones commemorating men of whom it was recorded that they had "departed this life suddenly."

I naturally asked how such an epidemic of accident had happened, and Mr. Nobbs, gravely smiling, replied that they had been all hanged in the bad old convict days. Decease of this nature is not usually so respectfully handled, and it impressed me as a quaint way of treating an unpleasant incident.

On June 1 we took a regretful farewell of our friends, and with an exchange of good wishes and presents we went on our way. Steering to the north-west, on the fourteenth day we sighted Keppel and Boscawen Islands, and hove to about a mile from the reef, feasting our eyes on the fairy island rising from the still blue water into two wooded peaks, shimmering in air as blue and still, with a white coral beach glittering below, and the little native huts peeping out like birds'-nests between the trees. Keppel is but some four miles long by two and a half broad, but, being of coral and volcanic origin combined, it has the beauty of both—the bold volcanic heights and the coralline beach and verdant levels. On strictly coral islands there are no trees but cocoa-nut and small palms, but here they are mingled with forests, and the light green is broken with lovelier and deeper tints.

Such enchanting descriptions have been given of the islands that we were half prepared for disappointment; but some of these paradises of the South Seas, afloat on the summer ocean, with sparkling beach, deep shade of leaves, and glory of fruit and flowers, seemed, and still seem, to me to be more beautiful than can be told in words.

We landed at once, to make the acquaintance of the islanders, wondering if in appearance at least they would be fitting inhabitants for their Eden. We went fully armed, for, as in other Edens, the snake is not

always absent, and we knew nothing of their disposition to strangers.

Judge, then, of our pleasure on seeing a group of fishers on a reef—young men and women—disperse, and, after some consultation, move towards us instead of flying at our approach. We beckoned, and the young folk came running and gathered about us without a sign of fear, shaking our hands and uttering strange, pleasant sounds of welcome.

We seemed to grow suddenly short and thick-set as we stood amongst them—but what wonder? Their stature, even that of the women, was far above the average, and their limbs so symmetrical as to give an idea of undeteriorated physical perfection. The noble head was well set on the round throat, over a massive shoulder, and every movement, from the turn of the head to the poise of the shapely foot, was a delight of grace and strength. The features were sometimes beautiful, the short curled lip and keen eye recalling the imperishable work of the Greek sculptors. The colour was a pale bronze—most beautiful, too, in its adaptation to the surroundings. The women wore the "ti-ti," a short grass petticoat ornamented with feathers and bright ribbons of seaweed, and a few white shells. The skin of the girls was satin soft, as that of the Greek athletes, from the constant use of cocoa-nut oil, and their dark eyes were full of laughter as they smiled at us with lips perhaps a little too full for the rigid ideal of beauty, when we attempted to make them understand. I grieve to think of the changes that so-called civilisation has since brought to those innocent and happy people.

In every house that we entered clean mats were spread for us, and we were offered bananas, mami

apples, and cocoa-nut milk; and all this with a charming natural courtesy which, as we stood away that evening for Niua or Good Hope Island, sent with us delightful memories of these happy and kindly people.

At Niua the soil is so scanty and the lava rock so hard that the inhabitants are obliged to raise the surface of their burial-places, and, excepting for one small and brackish spring, rain is the only fresh water. But the island is glorious with vegetation, and no drought need alarm the natives, for they are supplied with milk by millions of cocoa-nuts. The most singular feature is a lake, about six miles in circumference, lying in the bed of a vast extinct crater between wooded and hilly shores, and bearing on its bosom three lovely islets.

As I looked down from a height of 400 or 500 feet, Niua itself seemed but a morsel of green afloat on a world of waters, and the lake a speck of silver dropped in its centre.

The chief gave us a banquet under the eaves of his talking-room—roast pig, bread-fruit, and an enormous land-crab, the latter being a dish for a gourmet. It feeds only on the nuts which fall from the cocoa-nut-trees, and the flavour is delicious.

After visiting many other islands of the Friendly and Tonga groups, we bore away for the Ellice Islands, the very existence of which was at that time doubted. But on July 31 we sighted the Mitchell group, a cluster of islets situated on a coral reef. The surface of these flat coral islets is like the clean white sanded floor of an old English kitchen. The cocoa-nut-tree springs up everywhere, but in the spots where yams and taro are grown the sand is hollowed out, and a pit formed from 100 to 200 yards long, and of

varying width, into which decaying cocoa-nut leaves and refuse are thrown, until a rich soil is produced.

Here it was that I unravelled the mystery of those sad-eyed, broken-hearted South Sea Islanders whom I had seen working twenty years before in abject slavery on the Chincha Guano Islands. These people, then on the principal island, numbered 450 souls, living in peace and plenty. One day three large barques under Spanish colours appeared off the shore, and an old man landed, telling the natives that they were missionaries, and desired their presence on board, that they might receive the Holy Sacrament. All the able-bodied men went in simple faith, and were immediately made prisoners, and, this done, the old fiend went ashore again and told the women and children that the men had sent for them, and they also were beguiled. The tragedy thus complete, the ships bore away for the Guano Islands, and no word from that day ever reached their homes as to the fate of the lost ones. It was sickening to hear the tale told on the spot that had witnessed their sorrow, and to remember the hopeless and unending toil, far from all that made life worth living to these simple children of the sun. Two of the men, one of whom we saw, had contrived to jump overboard, and swim back, six or seven miles, to the island, but that was all—the rest had gone for ever.

Having learnt the position of the only inhabited island of the Ellice group, we reached it next night. Once inside the usual enclosing reef, we saw the full size of the lagoon it shelters, some eighteen miles long and nine wide, lying in a glorious glitter of moonlight.

"Nothing slept that sleepless night,
Moonlight held the world awake;
Raptured shore gazed cold to shore,
Lake to sky and sky to lake."

Every leaf and frond was clear cut in the radiance, and the coral surface was silvery in its pure whiteness, flecked with the shadows of the trees, whilst the human touch was there in the yellower glow of the little cocoa-oil lamps from the oval huts of the natives.

I paused to look at the mingling of the two lights, the earthly and the heavenly. It was the glory that is seen in the "Notte" of Correggio, where the cold clear dawn comes stealing through the door and meets the warm radiance thrown upward from the body of the Child Christ upon the faces of His adorers—a strange and lovely conception. The little huts are open on all sides, and the forms of their owners soon began to emerge like shadows and flit towards us.

Indeed, it was a dream scene. Even the roar of the surf was like silence in its soft, unceasing thunder, and if the reality had dissolved into nothingness before our eyes, it would scarcely have seemed surprising.

Thus we passed from island to island, scattered and minute, strewn like dust on the bosom of the great ocean—some isolated by 100 miles of water, none larger than a small village, yet each bearing its own share of human happiness and hope, and each, alas! in too many cases, its dark memory of the cruelties of the kidnappers.

We added much to the then scanty store of hydrographical knowledge. We sailed in deep water over the site of an island named Grancocal, but could find no trace of its existence. Then, reaching the mountainous island of Tapona, or Edgecombe Island (which had never been landed on, a previous visitor and H.M.S. *Rosario* having reported that no passage existed through the encircling reef), we found a safe channel, carrying 4 fathoms, leading into a lagoon

big enough to hold a navy, with a noble harbour on its west side, of which we made a running survey.

We called it Basilisk Harbour, in honour of the ship, and felt rather proud of our discovery of so important an anchorage.

The natives, woolly-headed and black, were friendly creatures, but a degraded-looking race, with few mats or articles worth barter.

On our way to Santa Cruz we passed the neighbouring island of Makupu as the sun was setting. Used as I was to the glowing Devonshire sunsets, I had never seen such a conflagration of ardent colour and living gold as here.

To the south Santa Cruz shot its wooded height through 2,000 feet of soft, grey air, the groves that mark the villages bathed in the evening dusk; and to the west, as from "a sea of glass mingled with fire," the mighty volcanic cone of Tinakula rose into a sky as glorious, rolling out volumes of smoke, dyed into unearthly splendour by the sunset, whilst the base swam in shadow. To the north-west lay the little island of Nukupu, the scene of Bishop Patteson's death. Possibly, we thought, his last sunset might have been thus glorious, and words passed into silence.

Little I dreamed as we cast anchor at Santa Cruz that three years later it also would be the scene of a great and good man's death, but so it was; for here Commodore Goodenough was shot down by the poisoned arrows of those savages who, although they had an evil reputation, received us with perfect friendliness, and crowded on board to barter their arrows and shell ornaments.

But the cause of this change of feeling is not obscure. A few months before his arrival at Santa Cruz the

schooner *Sandfly* had been there, and the commander, thinking the natives aggressive when they came on board, forced them back into their canoes, firing on them and killing several. The result was the establishment of a blood-feud, and, unfortunately, Goodenough and his men were the next white comers, and paid the penalty.

But we landed our men with an armed guard, and whilst we were watering at a clear mountain stream which ran into the bay, they gathered in groups on the bank, bathing, washing their clothes, or lounging in idle enjoyment—such enjoyment as none but sailors can appreciate after a long cruise. One instance of honesty in the people impressed me. My coxswain had traded a fowl from a native, and, locking its wings, placed it under the boat's thwarts. The bird, however, freed itself, and flew like a partridge into the bush; and, seeing this, the owner of the fowl brought the trade back, and would have forced it upon us, though we refused to profit by his honesty. It was at this identical spot that Goodenough was shot.

From Santa Cruz we worked our way south, visiting every one of the New Hebrides and Loyalty groups, accumulating as we went a mass of information as regards kidnapping and the social condition of the islanders, which was afterwards referred to in both Houses of Parliament.

Finally we reached Sydney, after an absence of four and a half months, during which we had visited no less than 132 different islands, and were again fortunate enough to receive the approval of the Admiralty.

CHAPTER XXVII

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—TORRES STRAITS AND SOUTH-EAST NEW GUINEA

"O, Young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam."

TENNYSON.

ON December 5, 1872, we left Sydney under orders from the Admiralty to proceed again to Torres Straits and the coast of New Guinea. We had gone through nine months of ceaseless work under tropical conditions, but the ship was ready, and we faced the work before us.

I had an encouraging meeting with Lord Normanby and the Prime Minister, Mr. Palmer, at Brisbane. I informed them that the Kidnapping Act having now become law, the principal object of the cruise was to suppress illegal practices in connection with the pearl-shelling in Torres Straits, and that I was also directed to make inquiry as to the fate or whereabouts of Mr. Miklucko Macklay, the eminent Russian traveller, who had been landed on the northern shores of New Guinea. My hope was that during the performance of these

duties opportunity might occur of special service to the Colony

Much of the navigation of Torres Straits was still unknown, and a project of running the mail steamers between Brisbane and Singapore by that route was under consideration. It was thus of the utmost importance to investigate the many dangers, and indicate a safe course.

The Queensland Government cordially accepted my offers of service, if it became possible in the course of duty, and at my request permitted Lieutenant Connor, R.N., the surveying officer attached to the Colony, to accompany us. So it was with much satisfaction that I received Mr. Connor, and stowed him away in my side cabin.

Leaving Brisbane on January 5, 1873, we began our adventures by seizing two schooners—the *Melanie* with fifty-five and the *Challenge* with thirty-three kidnapped islanders on board—and we later captured the barque *Crishna*. I sent the two first to Sydney, and they were condemned; but on appeal to the home Privy Council, the vessels were restored on paying all costs connected with the case, their plea being that the natives were kidnapped before the Act had passed.

With the *Crishna* we were more fortunate, for she was condemned and sold for £3,900—a very cheering piece of intelligence to us. However, the Imperial Government claimed half this sum, and the law expenses swallowed up the rest, so that not one brass farthing ever reached the *Basilisk*. So much for our prize-money! But at the time the anticipation was extremely useful, for it encouraged the ship's company, and relieved the monotony of very hard work On our way north, wishing to clear up a doubt as to the

existence of a river reported at the bottom of Lloyd's Bay, I anchored at a spot marked on the chart, "Apparent opening of large river."

A glance at the map of North Queensland will show that a river here would be a rich gift of Nature. For two days, tormented by heat and mosquitoes, we explored one salt-water creek after another, but it was a failure. There was no river. The drainage of a hill range inland had created a large swamp, and this was all.

The heat now began to be very trying—90° on deck under the awnings. The *Basilisk* had earned herself a bad reputation as a sickly ship in a former commission, and it struck me that the cause might lie in the isolation of the engine-room, which was shut in by strong bulkheads, thus preventing a free circulation of air.

To remedy this we cut a large scuttle, about 4 feet square, between the lower deck and foremost stokehold, and the result was a great success, for the rush of cold air to the furnaces was such as to make the lower deck one of the coolest places in the ship, and to this simple measure I principally attribute the marvellous healthiness of the crew during our years of tropical service, the total of deaths being two, one from an accident and one from rapid consumption.

On January 11 we took up our old anchorage off Somerset, and saw the anchor go down with different feelings from those of last year. Then its plunge had marked our completed work; now Cape York was but a starting-point.

On January 24 we proceeded through an uncharted portion of Torres Straits, surveying as we went. Next day we found a deep-water channel on our way

to Jervis Island, but reaching a supposed clear patch of surveyed water, we struck and remained fast on a sandy knoll. It was ebb tide; we ran out an anchor and cable astern, got the guns aft and waited the flow, when the old ship got off unharmed.

It was now and for the rest of the cruise that I felt the shortage of officers, consequent on so many being absent in our prizes. Of executive officers I had only left the first and navigating lieutenants and two young midshipmen; but in Mr. Bentley, the gunner, and Mr. Mudge, the boatswain, I had two on whom I could and did depend in every emergency.

At Jervis Island we found a large harbour, which we carefully surveyed. It proved a valuable anchorage, and has become a main resort of the pearl-shell industry. We named it Philip Harbour.

The space which lies between Jervis Island and the low mangrove-covered coast of New Guinea is a mass of coral reef, and contains no secure waterway. Thus all the passages by which ships can enter Torres Straits lie between Jervis Island and Cape York, and are now British waters. They are very narrow, all under two miles in width, and the principal one—Prince of Wales Channel—is scarcely a mile and a half wide. We hold, therefore, this great ocean highway on the best strategic terms, for a few torpedoes judiciously disposed would effectually block the route.

On January 30 we crossed an unknown part of the Straits supposed to be closed by coral. We picked our way very cautiously through these dangerous waters, with only a few spare feet under our keel, and anchored off Cornwallis Island, about five miles from the low malarious coast of New Guinea. Cornwallis rises to a height of 790 feet, and on its north-eastern

side lie some fine districts of grassy land, well supplied with water. Here were established the native village and mission-station, but the houses are only occasionally occupied by natives, their permanent home being at Saibai, a low-lying island three miles to the eastward, where the dwellings had one peculiarity we did not notice elsewhere. They were built on poles in the ordinary way, but the upper room was used as the better chamber and sleeping-place, and the lower, formed by thatching in the poles, as a storeroom for weapons and fishing-gear.

Human skulls were suspended round these dwellings, but in spite of this ominous sign, the natives have no need of cannibalism, having plenty of vegetables, fish, and pigs, besides turtle and the flesh of the dugong, which is very good eating and tastes like veal. The people were tall and muscular, jet-black and with lustrous brown eyes; they have good features and crisp woolly hair. Their weapons were tomahawks and powerful 6-foot bows. The arrows are poisoned, and are said to cause convulsions and rapid death.

At Saibai we left Lieutenant Connor with Mr. Pitt (midshipman) and four men in the pinnace, and also a fine whale-boat, lent us by Mr. Jardine, of Cape York, and manned by five of our best seamen, to survey these newly known islands and the opposite coast of New Guinea, whilst we sailed for the eastern islands of Torres Straits, and the entirely unknown New Guinea coast, 300 miles east of this point.

As we lost sight of the boats, a great anxiety possessed me. I should be called severely to account for such an unusual proceeding, and there were many chances of quarrels with the natives, sickness, sudden gales, and unknown navigation; but the surveying

work to be done was of high importance, and I had the utmost confidence in Connor's prudence and seamanship.

Having completed our inspection of the pearl-shell and bêch-de-mer fishing-stations on the various islands in the Straits, we stood across the Gulf of Papua for Redscar Bay, about 300 miles distant on the east New Guinea coast.

This district was partially surveyed by Captain Owen Stanley in 1849, but his party only attempted landing once, believing the natives to be dangerous. A few months before our arrival the London Missionary Society had landed native teachers here, in the vain hope that they would exercise some influence on the aborigines, who supplied them with food so long as they were able to pay for it, and then let them severely alone. We found them so near death from starvation that, as the only chance of saving their lives, they were by our doctor's advice taken on board the *Basilisk*, and their wives were made comfortable in my cabin.

Anchoring in Redscar Bay, we pulled for four miles over a dangerous shallow flat formed by the deposit of the rivers which empty themselves by the Towton opening at the head of this bay, and, passing through the opening, entered a splendid expanse of inland water about three miles wide, and showing no limit as to length except where a wooded islet intercepted our view.

It apparently offered a promising waterway into the heart of New Guinea, and we therefore resolved to explore it, though with some anxiety as to the reception we might meet with from the natives. We took every precaution in our power, and then landed

at the principal village. Here a large crowd was watching and waiting for us. They were wholly unarmed, and, without a sign of distrust, gave us a hearty welcome.

It was very surprising to see how much the men differed from the tall, muscular black Papuans we had left in Torres Straits. These were more of the Malay type: small, lithe people, copper-coloured, with clean-cut features and pleasant expression. They wore their own hair widely frizzled out, mop-fashion, and were slightly tattooed with stars and small figures on the breast and shoulders.

They had no clothing but a sort of leaf girdle. The young men were decked with white cowrie-shells, and bird of paradise and cassowary plumes on their heads and shoulders. The septum of the nose and the lobes of the ear were pierced, and tortoiseshell rings inserted.

The women were ill-made and slovenly looking as compared with the men. They wore the "ti-ti," or grass petticoat, but the otherwise naked body was adorned with tattooing of such intricacy that it might almost bear comparison with the exquisite designs I had seen in Japan.

The village stood on swampy ground, the houses raised on poles 15 or 20 feet in height, somewhat above the range of the vicious mosquitoes which blackened the air. The entrance is at the gable end, where there is a large bamboo platform before the door, and this serves as a pleasant chatting-place or cool seat for the family at meals.

The next day the gunner and I in the galley, and the first lieutenant and doctor in the gig, made an attempt to ascend one of the rivers to its source in the

mountains of Owen Stanley Range, the nearest spur seeming not more than twenty miles away.

With a fresh breeze aiding us against the downward current, we passed up the wide estuary (named by us Galley Reach), and made for the mouth of a fine stream, which we named Usborne River. We understood that this led to the home of a warlike and much-dreaded tribe, and I determined, if possible, to meet this people, and gain their friendship and concurrence in our attempt to reach the interior. My time, however, was short, for I was due at Cape York in three weeks, and was anxious also to examine the unknown New Guinea coast farther to the eastward.

The river had a rapid current, and was from 100 to 120 yards broad, with an average depth of 12 feet. Black fœtid mud formed the banks, and from this sprang dreary mangrove-trees, ranking their trunks so closely that it was difficult to pass between them. We frequently landed, and strove to penetrate this slimy forest, hoping to reach some clearer ground; but, after many efforts, much slipping into the slime off the mangrove roots, and relentless invasion of red and brown crabs, lizard snakes, and other ugly creatures in their happy homes, we had to return to the boats.

The edge of these mangrove banks was lined with a gigantic shrub, which, for want of better knowledge, I call a bastard palm. It has no trunk, but sends up great leaf-branches of a palm shape, each 30 or 40 feet long, and arching over the stream at a height of 5 or 6 feet. A smaller species was armed on the leaf-edge with sharp, strong hooks, and these, bending low, often lacerated our flesh, obliged as we were to hug the bank in order to avoid the strong current.

We struggled on for ten miles, when we were cheered by seeing the banks rise a little. Presently a grassy glade opened upon our view, and we were quickly on shore, with triangles rigged, and our dinners cooking over a fine wood-fire, the smoke of which somewhat daunted the mosquitoes.

We shot a huge serpent of the boa tribe twined round the trunk of a tree. It was gorged and fast asleep, and about 20 feet long.

After dinner heavy rain fell, but we struggled manfully on against the fierce current until nightfall, and then, anchoring in mid-stream, prepared to pass the night. There was not much we could do for comfort, but we covered the boats in with rain awnings, and had an impromptu penny reading, with plenty of songs; and when ready for sleep we each took a dose of quinine and settled down for what we hoped would prove a quiet night. A quiet night! The satire of the words! If ever poor mortals suffered in a small way the tortures of the lost, it was then. The air was thick with mosquitoes, armed with stings that might have pierced an ironclad! They nearly drove us into the water, and I had to caution the men continually to keep their arms and legs in-board for fear of the alligators. "The explorer's lot is not a happy one!" We were glad to be at work again before daylight, for I know nothing more conducive to early rising than the mosquito at his best and fiercest.

With the dawn the country was disclosed to view, for the banks were now open and undulating, so that we could see all kinds of palms and the exquisite tree-fern, with many others that we were not able to name, stretching away on every side into a great forest.

The silence, but for our oars, was unbroken. Land

and water seemed asleep; not a breeze stirred; neither man nor beast appeared to dispute our passage. But as the sun rushed up into the heavens the birds awaked with discordant screams—parrots, cockatoos, and the great crowned pigeon. Large white storks were numerous and many other birds, but no animal was to be heard or seen, and the birds soon sank into quiet.

We breakfasted and pushed on against a still increasing current, through which we made headway only by continually shooting the stream from side to side, and gaining the shelter of the projecting points. But it was difficult work, for huge snags and fallen trees barricaded the stream, and many and narrow were our escapes from upset. Finally, we came to a place where the waters forked, and, keeping to the main stream, found ourselves in a rapid river fully 25 feet deep.

I felt sure that such a volume of water must have a clear course of many miles, but in half an hour we were brought to a standstill by a vast accumulation of fallen trees—the débris of ages swept down from the mountains, and this had completely bridged the river, here 60 feet wide. Rank vegetation grew from the decayed trunks, binding the mass together; and though the river rushed furiously underneath, it could not sweep away the barrier of its own creation.

We made every effort to find a way through, but having neither time nor means to haul the boats overland, we had to give up and turn back. I would have given much to explore to the head of this river, and I hoped others would follow with better success, since river communication certainly must be of the first importance in opening up New Guinea.

We went swiftly down with the current, and that night I slept in a native house, that rocked gently on its poles in the breeze with the motion of a ship at sea.

Since I had thus been disappointed in reaching the interior of New Guinea, and in finding any trace of inland inhabitants, I resolved to make another effort to find a river which might form an inland highway; but it was of more present importance to find traces of the Russian traveller, and to explore the unknown coast to the south-east.

These steps involved a serious responsibility, which I well knew nothing short of complete success could justify. We were already sixty miles outside the northern limit of the Australian Station, and I had to consider how far my orders respecting the Russian Miklucko Macklay would justify me in proceeding on so hazardous a quest in a ship unfitted by size and draft of water to explore a coral sea.

As I pondered over the chart, which told me nothing, I reflected that, if this opportunity was lost, alien nations might hoist their flag where England's only should fly, and this would be for ever a bar to Australia's natural dominion.

Therefore I made up my mind that, if all went well, the *Basilisk* should see what the east end of New Guinea was like, and trust in Providence for the result.

CHAPTER XXVIII

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—DISCOVERY OF PORT MORESBY

"No want was there of human sustenance—
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots;
Nor, save for pity, was it hard to take
The helpless life, so wild that it was tame."

TENNYSON.

To explore the coral-strewn waters before us in the ship, without any previous survey, was too great a risk. Therefore, on February 17, leaving the *Basilisk* at Redscar, Lieutenant Mourilyan and I started in the cutter and galley, well armed and supplied, to examine the coast for fifty miles to the eastward.

This coast had been surveyed by Captain Owen Stanley some thirty years earlier from outside the Barrier Reef, which, with the general outline of the coast, he correctly laid down; but no attempt had been made to land or to survey inside the reef, and this deficiency we desired to remedy.

Immediately to the east of Redscar Head the outlying Barrier Reef lifts itself to the surface at a distance of three to eight miles off shore, and guards the coast from the surf.

The coast also rises, and precipitous grassy hills spring from the coral and sandy beaches. Between these hills fertile valleys lie, and villages nestle among groves of cocoa-nut-trees.

The houses are built, Malay fashion, on poles—some standing far out on the reefs in quiet waters; others clustering among the plantations on the hill-sides.

After examining a vast extent of unknown reefs, we landed the first day to dine at Cliff Island, a flat coral rock covered with grass some twenty miles from Redscar Bay. From this spot the water inside the Barrier Reef appeared to be blocked by coral eastward, but on continuing our soundings we found a fine deep-water passage leading east between these reefs and the mainland.

Reaching an island named by us Lily, Mr. Mourilyan, in the cutter, kept to the deep-water passage outside it, and I attempted to take the galley between it and the mainland, but found the latter joined to the island by long sandy spits. We grounded opposite a large village standing far out in the clear blue water and stretching back into the verdure of the hills; and the simple people came off at once, unarmed, and to the number of about 100, with amazement on their faces, but not a shade of fear.

We were probably the first white men they had seen, and their curiosity was so eager that our men mistook it at first and seized their arms. I had noticed, however, not only that the natives were unarmed, but also that their women and children had all turned out on the beach to see us, and therefore bade the men welcome the New Guinea people as friends, and friends the kindly creatures proved.

After they had marvelled over us to their hearts' content, we induced them to track our boat through a narrow channel, and thus rejoined the cutter. We then took a series of soundings from Lily Island to Fisherman's Islets, the home of innumerable Torres

Straits pigeons. Here we supped on a delicious stew of these birds, and then the boats, converted by awnings into floating tents, were hauled off and anchored. The men lit their pipes, and, after readings and singing, we slept like princes. Next morning, after inspection of arms and morning prayer, Mourilyan took the cutter to examine a large bay in the mainland, whilst I attempted to find a ship-passage through the Barrier. From the boat I could see nothing but reefs, so, landing, I climbed the steep sides of Pyramid Point. I stood at a height of about 600 feet above the sea, and could see for miles on either side every coral patch that lay relieved by its clear pale green from the ultramarine of the deep water. The Barrier Reef stretched away like a floating green ribbon, its edge fringed by a line of snow-white surf. At one point the ribbon was divided—a space of blue untroubled water between—and this, I trusted, was the entrance I sought. A group of small uncharted islands lay below us, so turning to the fine young seaman beside me, I asked if he would wish them to bear his name, and shall not easily forget his look of pleasure. They were accordingly entered as "Head Islets"; but, alas! in this case, as in many others, later geographers have altered the names we bestowed to native ones.

I made my notes, and, descending, found my men on the best terms with a crowd of natives, bartering their feathers and cocoa-nuts for beads. It was now late, so we supped on the frequent fare of pigeons, and were asleep in the boats as soon as our heads were laid down.

Next morning we were making early for the entrance in the Barrier Reef, and were soon assured that a passage did exist, about three-quarters of a mile broad, and bottomless as far as our lines went.

With our boat's bows resting on one horn of the reef, her stern was in deep water, so abruptly does this coral wall rise from its ocean depths. The cutter had gone to the bay to complete the survey, so we joined her there, and Mourilyan met me with the welcome news that a land-locked harbour existed at the head of the bay. The bay itself was a fine sheltered anchorage very different from the wild, exposed one of Redscar, hitherto the only known shelter for ships on the east coast of New Guinea east of Torres Straits.

We went at once to examine the harbour at the head of the bay, and, to our delight, found a deep-water passage leading to a broad sheet of calm water, deep enough nearly everywhere to float the largest ship; and, seeing this, we resolved that the *Basilisk* should be the first to honour the new harbour with her presence.

We landed on a wooded island at the head of the outer bay, named by us Jane Island, and found a fine well there, from which the natives aided us to fill our water barricoes. We had come upon them in their age of stone, and they had no knowledge of the use of the iron we offered them, but they were willing to exchange their greenstone axes and adzes for our beads.

Next morning we started to rejoin the ship, but our prolonged absence had made Lieutenant Hayter uneasy, and we met him coming down the coast in search of us. It was taking a great risk. When I got on board, the ship was surrounded by coral reefs in an open bay, with barely enough water to float her, and this so discoloured as to hide the reefs. We had an anxious time before we were able to clear the dangers, and therefore gave it the name of Caution Bay, as a warning to future navigators.

At ten o'clock on February 20 the *Basilisk* was off

the opening we had found in the reef, henceforth to be known as Basilisk Pass, and from the foretop I conned her into the still waters of Port Moresby, past Jane Island, into the land-locked Fairfax Harbour, where we anchored in five fathoms. As we broke into these unknown waters I determined that the outer and inner harbours should bear the names of my father.

Port Moresby has fulfilled all my anticipations, having now been for twenty years the seat of government of the Colony of New Guinea, the acquisition of which was the eventual result of our discoveries and explorations. We fixed its latitude as 9° 30′ S., and longitude 147° 10′ E.

We must have been a surprising sight to the natives when they flocked on board, devoured by curiosity and chattering like monkeys, as they pointed out to each other the marvels that took their fancy.

Mourilyan and I made a survey of the harbour, and I despatched Hayter with the galley to continue our explorations inside the Barrier Reef for forty miles east of Port Moresby to Hood's Point. It was now that the usefulness of the hydrographer's surveying instruments were proved. Port Moresby, as plotted by us, has been little altered by the more skilful surveyors of later years.

We visited some of the hill villages, and found ourselves overlooking a rich tropical valley, with villages upon the opposite hill-sides, amongst abundant trees. The thin rocky soil gave place, as we began to descend the slope, to dark mould, from which grass sprang nearly shoulder high. Here and there were large enclosed plots, protected by stiff bamboo fences, and producing bananas, yams, and taro in profusion. The bananas were neatly tied up in leaves to save

them from the flying foxes. The only tools used in turning the soil were stone adzes, capable of penetrating for about 4 inches.

We showed the women a looking-glass, and they started back and dared not look again. I offered my watch for examination, but no one would touch the possessed-looking thing.

To show their friendliness I will mention one fact. Mr. Watts, one of our engineers, lost his way and fell in with a party of natives. Far from attempting to take advantage of his helplessness, they fed him and took him to the village, making signs that they wished him to sleep there. Finding, however, that he preferred to return, they offered to guide him, on condition that he should first show himself in the village and make a liberal display of his white skin. This he unblushingly did, and was handled and gazed at by scores of marvelling natives. The chaffing he got when he told us the story made him regret his candour. The incident recalls a scene in Rider Haggard's well-known book "King Solomon's Mines"—beloved of boys.

The Port Moresby people numbered about 800, and were well fed and contented-looking. The women seemed to busy themselves with pottery, making large globe-shaped jars, which they baked slowly amongst the embers of a wood-fire. They used these jars in their cooking, and I have eaten a vegetable porridge thus cooked, consisting of mangrove fruit, taro, and yams, with cocoa-nut finely shred over all. It was excellent.

In their large and beautifully constructed sailing canoes, they export these jars in great quantities to various parts of the coast. Their netted bags and fishing-nets were made exactly like our own, so that

our men often took up their shuttles and went on with the mesh.

A curious incident once happened. A number of natives came on board, bringing a bundle of rushes, and knotting them together, carefully measured the length and breadth of the ship. They evidently wished to preserve a record of her size, for they stowed the rush-line away in their canoe with many signs of wonderment.

At most of the villages on this coast the men liked to hold our hands as we passed through, and plainly signified that they did not wish us to enter their houses; but if we pressed the point, they yielded and waited patiently outside. They were all of the light-coloured Malay race, and were without bows and arrows. As far as Redscar Bay we saw toy bows among the children, but beyond that point the bow ceases till it reappears on the northern shores west of Astrolabe Gulf.

On February 26 Lieutenant Hayter returned, having made soundings and examined over fifty miles of coast, in which neither harbour nor river was to be seen. He confirmed our good opinion of the natives.

The next day was an anxious but successful one. I had set my heart on finding a passage by an inshore route between the mainland and Barrier Reef, so as to prove that Port Moresby might be reached thus, as well as through Basilisk Pass. With the gunner (Mr. Bentley) by my side, I therefore conned the ship from the foretop through the winding channel, running between reefs, and having several times but 3 feet of water to spare under our keel. It was an anxious time, but we never touched, and finally dropped anchor safe and sound in Redscar Bay. It seemed a miser-

able spot enough after Port Moresby, girt with mountains and beautiful with its lake-like harbour. Was it wonderful if we were all inclined to a little exultation ?

Once more I made an attempt to explore the northern branch of the Redscar River, but it was again a failure. For the best part of two days we struggled in the galley against the stream, one and all taking spells at the oars. But the strength of the current increased rapidly, and uprooted trees and logs came shooting round abrupt bends, and made progress so dangerous that we finally turned back, leaving to successors the honour of reaching the highlands of New Guinea by this waterway. The two rivers were named by us the Usborne and the Edith. Both could be ascended by a steam-launch, and used for rafting down timber and other produce to the sea.

March 5 found us once more at Cape York, where the store-ship from Sydney awaited us.

A few days later Lieutenant Connor and Mr. Pitt rejoined us from their survey on the northern shores of Torres Straits. They and their nine men had been detached for six weeks in open boats, exposed to a tropical sun and much severity of weather, and now returned, having made a valuable trigonometrical survey of Saibai, Cornwallis Island, and a part of the New Guinea coast. I cannot describe the relief and pleasure it was to welcome our shipmates in rude health, burnt almost as dark as Papuans, but ready to start again at a moment's notice.

CHAPTER XXIX

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—DISCOVERIES: EAST NEW GUINEA

"Till a voice as bad as conscience rang interminable changes
On one everlasting whisper day and night repeated—so:

"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges.
Something lost behind the Ranges—lost and waiting for you. Go!"

KIPLING: *The Explorer.*

WE had expected to receive fresh orders by the store-ship, but none having come, I had to remain two months on this part of the station.

From Lord Normanby I had a request to co-operate with Mr. Jardine in choosing another site for the increasing establishment at Somerset; I also had to revisit the principal pearl-shelling stations. But these two duties would barely occupy a week; therefore the question lay between two months' idleness and two months' work. My sailing orders placed my limit 148° east longitude, but I still had discretionary powers to clear up the fate of the missing Russian traveller, Miklucko Macklay.

Many rumours were afloat of Americans and French exploring Eastern New Guinea. I had realised its strategic necessity to Australia, and I feared that their efforts might lead to a foreign occupation, and the consequent cramping of the Australian Common-

wealth in its future development. I desired more than ever to secure for England the honour dûe to the Motherland of Cook, Dampier, and Owen Stanley, by filling in the last great blank in their work, and laying down the unknown outlines of the great island; I elected for work.

My means to accomplish these large designs were small.

Before leaving Cape York, I again entrusted Lieutenant Connor with the charge of the survey in Torres Straits, with Mr. Grant, midshipman, as his second, and our shipmates left us for two months' arduous work in open boats with the light-hearted energy which always sweetens detached service.

On March 28 we sailed from Cape York on our anxious cruise. We examined and reported favourably on Hammond Island, as being more suitable for a settlement than Somerset; and then, after visiting the pearl-shell stations, we finally left Torres Straits, glad to have an unentered field of labour before us.

Our first point was Yule Island, off which we had seen a large quantity of drift-wood, that led me to expect some great river issuing here from the mainland.

Yule Island had been laid down in the chart by Owen Stanley in 1849, but no man had ever penetrated into the noble-looking sheet of water that lay between it and the mainland. He had marked the north entrance as "probably a clear passage," but we found it blocked with reefs, whilst the southern entrance was a safe channel.

We took the *Basilisk* in, and she soon lay at anchor in the broad waters of Robert Hall Sound, as we decided to name this, our second-found harbour, after the Secretary of the Admiralty. It is land-locked and

has deep water, where hundreds of ships may lie in safety.

At the head of the harbour two rivers issue, named by us Hilda and Ethel, which baffled all our efforts at ascent by the strength of the stream, and the obstructions of drift-timber and weeds, matted together into an impassable barrier.

Sometimes ill-made native huts appeared on the banks, whence a track through the swamp led to some acres of raised ground carefully cultivated. The inhabitants hid in the swamp when we appeared, and indeed it must have seemed to them as if we had dropped from the clouds. It was marvellous that human life could subsist amidst the malaria of such surroundings.

I longed for a steam pinnace to ascend Hilda River, which evidently ran up into the heart of the country, and it was bitterly disappointing to have the fact unverified.

Returning to the ship, I landed on Yule Island. The natives seemed very averse from our visiting their village, but eventually took us by a winding path to the large clear space where it stood, with vegetable and fruit plantations neatly fenced and well kept. They then led us to a large empty house, providing us with cocoa-nut milk. The young women and children were kept out of sight in the bush, where we could hear them chattering and laughing; but the older women were about amongst us, and therefore I was satisfied that we should not be attacked.

Our attempts to trade were a failure, for, having no conception of the use of iron, they would not barter their handsome stone implements for our axes. The more we endeavoured to show their superior value by cutting and chopping branches, the more incredulously they smiled and grasped their own rude instruments.

Before long, having exhausted their curiosity on our white skins, clothes and watches, they made signs that they wished us to go; but first I thought it well to try the effect of fire-arms on their minds, so, placing a mark against a tree, I had a shot fired.

The first effect was blank amazement, and the second, when they saw the hole made by the ball, an increased anxiety to be rid of us. They would not touch our rifles, but pushed them away with terror.

Returning to the ship, we met natives diving for crayfish in 1 or 2 fathoms of water. Standing in their canoes, they waited till they saw the big unsuspicious crayfish crawl leisurely over the coral beneath, and then flashed overboard like ospreys, and rarely missed their prey.

On April 6 we left for East New Guinea, having anxious work before us, our path lying where no navigator had ever laid down a line for us to follow.

The danger which appears to have prevented mariners from nearing these unknown shores has been the sunken coral Barrier and other reefs which extend from Teste Island to the east for 200 miles—they are beaten upon by an everlasting surf, and swept by strong currents—and the supposed ferocity of the natives; but my conviction was strong that a passage might be found through the Louisiade Reef, which would open up a navigation between Australia and North-East New Guinea, and shorten the route between Australia and China.

On April 9 we finally passed out of partially surveyed waters, and steered for Teste Island, there to anchor for the night.

Teste Island, twenty-two miles south of the then supposed end of New Guinea, had been put on the

chart by Captain Stanley, but never visited. It is narrow, about two and a half miles long, with hills that rise at each end and dip in the centre.

Near Teste Island is Bell Rock, a fine mass of rock not more than 100 yards in circumference, rising perpendicularly from the sea to a height of 420 feet. Passing close to this noble landmark, we saw many of the natives, whose canoes were rocking on the calm waters at its base, perched like monkeys far up on its ledges, waving green branches and making all possible signs of friendship. We returned these signs, and steered for Teste Island, with many canoes and catamarans following, when an accident happened to one poor fellow which might have aroused suspicion amongst them. He had seized a fishing-line which our indefatigable fisherman, Dr. Goodman, was using, to save himself the trouble of paddling; the hook caught him, and his hands were badly torn.

The natives were at first shy of coming on board, but I went into a catamaran and with a piece of red cloth enticed one, after which they crowded on board—copper-coloured and intelligent, evidently of the same race as those at Port Moresby. We made up a party to visit them. They received us kindly, leading us by the hand to their village. Teste Island is rich in soil, with abundance of fruit and vegetable plantations. I cannot better describe the appearance of their houses than by recalling a large clothes-basket inverted and placed on poles 6 feet high, the basket 40 feet long by 12 feet wide, with a floor laid 4 feet below its rim, and neatly covered with mats. We found distinct traces of devil-worship here, a thing unknown in our after-experience of New Guinea. They possessed small ugly figures carved on sticks or bowls, which by signs they made

us understand had great power. These were in the keeping of the women, with whom we found it impossible to trade, whilst the men were ready to give all they possessed for our red cloth and knives—with one exception only, for they could hardly be induced to part with the ornaments made from the bones of slain enemies. These consisted of bracelets of jaw-bones and spiral rings, and they made us understand in a boastful way that they had eaten their first owners

From our anchorage at Teste Island the blue outline of the supposed New Guinea coast showed to the north at twenty miles' distance. I scanned it anxiously for some indication of its character, and drew comfort from its lofty appearance, for it was a bold, honest outline, and not a mass of swamp and reef.

Hoping for the best, we left Teste Island and started for what was marked on the chart as the "south-east end of Papua, indistinctly seen," laying down a line of soundings as we went, and having occasional alarm of shoal water, which proved only to be tide-rips.

As we neared our destination we found, to our surprise, that the so-called "south-east extremity" was nothing but a point on an island which evidently made one of a group lying about a mile off what we were now led to suppose was the true east extremity of Papua.

The weather came on thick and squally, so we sought an anchorage in a large bay some twelve miles to the westward of the island. It fortunately answered our expectations, and we took up a sheltered berth under what we now believed to be the mainland of New Guinea. Our anchor was scarcely let go before, from the villages on the sandy shores of the bay and from the newly found islets, canoes of all sizes issued

and hovered about us at a distance. We did our best to gain the goodwill of our visitors, knowing how much our future success depended on it, but for more than an hour all our peaceable signs and baits of bright-coloured cloths were unavailing.

The men, in some sixteen or twenty large canoes, armed with spears and stone tomahawks, sometimes made a few strokes with their paddles, as if they would venture alongside; but their hearts always failed them, and they stopped and anxiously scanned our every movement, ready for instant flight. At last, as we despaired of success, four men in one of the small canoes were induced to come near enough to receive our presents on the extreme ends of their paddles. They came still closer, and at last one bold islander, enticed by many presents, and encouraged by much patting on the back with "Come along, old fellow," slowly climbed the ladder, and stood on the quarter-deck, looking scared and squeezing his nose spasmodically with one forefinger and thumb and his navel with the other. Guessing it might mean some form of salutation, we all responded in the same fashion. The sight was ludicrous, but the effect was instantaneous: the scared look gave place to one of delight as he looked round, and his confidence was complete. Rejoicing in our discovery, we all stood on the gangways, and so displayed our knowledge that we made friends of the whole crowd. The only difficulty after this was to keep our new friends out of the ship.

It was dark before they left us that evening to quiet and consideration of the unexpected friendliness of the day. Their surprise was always great on first coming on board, at the size of the deck and especially at the brass rails and glass hatchway coverings, and

they expressed it by a peculiar inarticulate sound. Our first visitors at a new place would come up the ladder by degrees, and, peeping through the gangway, return to their canoes, telling the others what they had seen; then others stole up, till at last one more bold than the rest ventured on deck. One of us would take him by the hand and lead him forward to look at the wonders of the ship, and he would then return to his companions, bring them up, and (evidently proud of his position) show them what he himself had seen. It was with great difficulty we could get them to approach the sheep we had on board; they appeared to think them ferocious. It afforded them great amusement to watch us at meals, and they would sit in a circle round the ward-room skylight, pointing at us and occasionally roaring with laughter, and afterwards might be seen relating the details of the meal to their companions, and imitating our use of the knife and fork. They were willing to take anything that came from the ship in the way of barter: cocked hats manufactured out of newspapers had a great run for a short time; pictures they seemed slow to comprehend, but would accept. Hoop-iron, however, was always in the greatest demand from the time we first offered it, and thus this anchorage came to be named Hoop-Iron Bay. The price of a pig varied here from one to three trade hatchets, and as a proof of the honesty of the vendors, it should be told that a pig which was bought from them having jumped overboard at night and been drowned, was brought to us by a canoe in the morning. From henceforth in New Guinea hoop-iron became the standard of value; for these natives, unlike those at Robert Hall Sound and Redscar Bay, were alive to the value of iron, some few carefully

preserved specimens of which, in the shape of sharpened bolts and spike-nails, we found scattered in most of their villages. These relics were probably obtained from the eastern island of the Louisiade group, where ships are known to have been wrecked, and with whose inhabitants intercourse was probably held by means of the large trading canoes frequently met by us at sea. The hoop-iron and scrap-iron had most value in their eyes, for it was readily shaped into the form of their stone hatchets; therefore all on board was served out in equal proportion to the various messes, and our men were enabled to purchase an abundant supply of provisions. The natives were a small, active, copper-coloured race, with frizzled hair standing out a foot from their heads. They paint and adorn themselves in a hideous manner, principally with black and white pigments, shells, strips of bark, and palm-leaves, and are cannibals, wearing the blackened jaw-bones of their enemies as bracelets. Some had the entire body covered with a mixture of charcoa land cocoa-nut oil, and they made us understand that it meant mourning for the dead. They appeared to treat their women kindly, and permitted them to have their say in bartering and meeting us freely.

The good feeling shown by these poor savages was an unspeakable comfort to me for every reason, not the least being that any hostility on their part would have hindered or even stopped our work. I do not apologise for my lengthened description of the natives. I have given it because no following discoveries can repeat the experiences of the earlier navigators in meeting and dealing with savages who have never before seen a white man; and these observations may therefore have some anthropological value.

On the south side of Hoop-Iron Bay was a precipitous islet 600 feet high.

Early on April 11 Mourilyan and I started to climb it for the purpose of taking a round of angles. From the ship O'Neill Island (as we named it, after our paymaster) appeared a steep ascent, crowned at the summit by one large and graceful tree, and covered with a soft velvety grass, delightful to walk upon. It proved to be coarse, sharp-edged, thickly interwoven, and from 10 to 14 feet high. Our party landed clear of the village, pushed its way through a belt of scrub, and found itself amongst this horrible grass. We faced it boldly, thinking at first that every step would show us daylight beyond, but it was no short work that lay before us.

Our plan was for the leading man to throw himself bodily forward and press the grass down with his dead-weight, and we relieved each other at this post of honour at very short intervals. We were soon all bleeding from the sharpness of the blades; the want of circulation of air between our grassy walls and the fierceness of the sun also tried us sorely. The coxswain, a powerful man, became exhausted, and we left him behind with one of the men, and struggled on, till after about two hours of effort we stood under the noble tree, with clothes cut into rags and skins not much better, but still arrived. After a rest we climbed the stately trunk, and were able to look down on our grassy enemy from its branches. The glorious prospect before us took all our thoughts; but what was this at which we stared on each other "with a wild surmise"? There lay the south-east end of New Guinea, with its great mountain chain cleft suddenly by a bright blue thread that lay across it. We thought our eyes must

be playing us false—that it could not be water, but was perhaps a blue mist lying in a deep valley, or a river. It was only visible in parts between the hills, but we could see an opening through which the sea appeared on the other side, and we exclaimed: "We have not yet found the true south-east extreme of New Guinea." Having taken our observations, we descended easily by our beaten track, and after dinner Mourilyan and I left the ship to make sure of the new discovery.

Then it was plain to be seen: a noble strait, in one part of a width of about a quarter of a mile, and expanding to three or four miles of navigable water, sprinkled with islets, leading through from sea to sea. It was flanked on both sides by mountains covered with forest, that rose steep from the water's edge to a height of about 1,400 feet. A fierce tide ran through Fortescue Straits, as we named them, causing an overfall dangerous for boats in the narrow parts. These straits cut off nearly fourteen miles from New Guinea, and gave us Moresby Island.

On Saturday, the 12th, we began a running survey of our discoveries, my hope being that Fortescue Straits would prove a navigable channel by which we could pass to the north side of New Guinea; and if so, it occurred to me that I might be able to point out a new and shorter route between Australia and China, as well as open up the northern shores of New Guinea to trade. It was therefore joyfully I satisfied myself that the *Basilisk* could be taken through Fortescue Straits.

Easter Sunday brought us some welcome rest, but not silence, for all day long the ship was surrounded by canoes filled with natives, who kept up a babel of sound. The next day we left Hoop-Iron Bay, and, taking the ship through the narrow waters lying

between O'Neill and Moresby Islands, we turned sharp to the northward and entered Fortescue Straits.

The broad waters of the great bay into which the straits opened lay before us, studded over with islets that seemed asleep in a great calm. We could scarcely believe that such beauties had been hidden from European eyes till now.

On clearing the straits I congratulated myself on gaining the open sea safely, and had gone below for a few minutes, when the sound of "Three fathoms" called from the chains brought me quickly on deck, to find that we had passed into a perfect labyrinth of reefs.

On one of them we touched, but, fortunately, passed over. Reefs and broken water now appeared in all directions, but we found our way to a snug anchorage off a small inhabited island, named by us Carrie Island.

As soon as the ship swung to her anchor all the boats were sent away to search for a channel through the reefs; but the more we laboured the more reefs we found, and of a particularly dangerous kind—small detached masses scattered about everywhere, like flowers in a flower-bed. The most diligent search only proved that no safe outlet existed through the reefs that blocked the northern entrance of Fortescue Straits.

Almost despairing of taking the ship through to the northern shores of New Guinea, I resolved to make such surveys as were possible in the boats, which, unfortunately, were of the most useless kind—a heavy, eight-oared cutter and my galley, a fast boat, but so lean at her ends as to be dangerous in a sea-way.

Leaving the ship anchored at Carrie Island on April 15, Mourilyan, Pitt, and I made an early start in the galley and cutter to survey the north and east

shores of Moresby Island, extending about twelve miles east and west. Villages and cultivated ground, with the sago-palm in profusion, abounded. The abrupt hills culminated in one lofty peak, 1,226 feet high, named by us Fairfax. Reaching the eastern extremity, I ascended a considerable hill, which I named Cape Look-out, and anxiously scanned the sea to the east. Alas! reefs were everywhere, but the view was very fine, and it was a stirring thing to be the first to gaze on the new groups of lovely islands, and, turning north, to see the dark purple D'Entrecasteaux Islands, twenty miles away, separate their lofty heights from the mass of New Guinea, of which hitherto they had often been supposed to be an integral part. To the north-west ran a large extent of lofty land, which I thought then to be a great unknown island, and resolved, if possible, to visit. I came down deeply impressed with the vast amount of work waiting to be done, and regretting the poverty of our time and means.

As night closed we ran into a capacious bay, which I named, after the midshipman of the cutter, Pitt, and, landing on a luxuriant little island, we lighted our fires, and ate and talked of the events of the day till the stars shone. We were weary enough to keep early hours, and, covering the boats in, we paddled out into the bay beyond mosquito range, and resigned ourselves to rest. It was not easy to sleep at once. The feeling of loneliness which the isolation of the spot was sure to produce, the sense of distance from home and friends, speculations upon what unknown thing the next day would offer, and as to the effect our discoveries might have on the course of trade and the future of New Guinea, refused to be dismissed.

The following morning we were early astir. During the night I had noticed that a portion of the tide escaped through a narrow opening into a part of Moresby Island. Examination showed it to be a fairy strait, which cut off a considerable piece of land from Moresby Island, and led us out on its south-east shores. On our way to the ship we landed at a large village. We were few in number, but the villagers received us with the greatest cordiality, making the usual absurd sign of welcome, and we strolled about, feeling quite at home, taking care, of course, not to separate from each other. They took us to a fine stream, with deep pools, containing fish near a pound in weight. A favourable breeze brought us safely on board in the evening.

I was now compelled to give up all hope of a safe passage for the ship through the north end of Fortescue Straits, and had to fall back on our boats for an expedition to what I thought to be a large island to the north-west. It was rather a serious undertaking. My chief uneasiness was with respect to the conduct of the natives we might meet, but it was probable the mere report of a gun would be sufficient to insure our safety.

Carrying a week's provisions, we started on April 19. Mourilyan being with me in the galley and Mr. Mudge in charge of the cutter, we made sail to the north-west. At noon we had opened out an extensive bay, about ten miles west of Fortescue Straits, which, as was evident from its size, must nearly unite with the sea on the south side of New Guinea. We therefore stood in south. The bay seemed to extend some ten miles from east to west, and six from north to south, studded over with wooded islets. Nearing the

southern shores, there certainly could not be half a mile of land lying between us and the southern sea. Presently two overlapping points seemed to separate, and through an opening, at first not bigger than a window, we saw the distant horizon! There lay a narrow strait before us, cutting off ten or twelve miles more from the supposed length of New Guinea. It looked as though a giant had bitten a morsel out of the narrow ridge of mountains that ran along the neck of land, and let the sea sweep through. Being anxious to explore this discovery before dark, the men gave way with a will, and we entered these river-like straits, about 100 yards wide, to which steep hills came down on each side. Numerous canoes were fishing, and their crews paddled wildly for the shore, and disappeared in the bush at our approach. We had not time to land and conciliate them, but pushed on through this remarkably beautiful opening into the great southern sea.

We had separated yet another island from New Guinea, and found ourselves in an open bay near a large village, where the inhabitants were watching us intently. We were anxious to find if this narrow opening would afford a passage for the ship, but a rocky ledge which ran across barred it effectually. The island now added to the map formed three sides of a hollow square open to the west, its length being about nine miles east and west and eight miles broad, where it joined the western boundary of Fortescue Straits. We named it after our good ship, *Basilisk*, and its highest peak, 600 feet high, Mount Goodman, after our doctor. The bay I named after my coxswain, Jenkins, and the islands scattered on its broad bosom after the boat's crew, fine cheerful young English seamen

as ever pulled an oar. However, none of these names have been retained on later charts.

We found rest for the night on a little button of an islet in Jenkins' Bay. The bay swarmed with pigeons, and thus we had a goodly supper. We finished our evening with an impromptu penny reading, followed by many songs, and as the last notes died away in silence we stretched ourselves on the thwarts and sank to sleep.

The next morning was Sunday, and after morning prayers we continued to track Jenkins Bay, and the farther we went the more the formation of the land led us to suppose that even now we had not found the elusive terminating-point of New Guinea. After pulling six or seven miles to the west, we found our conjecture verified by the discovery of a broad blue channel, two miles wide, leading fair from sea to sea, fit for a fleet to pass through under sail. Our hearts filled with delight and wonder as we looked. There and then I named it China Straits, the wish being father to the thought that I had found a new highway between Australia and China.

Before reaching China Straits our fresh water had been exhausted. Water was a necessity, so, seeing one of the large trading canoes standing in for China Straits, we gave chase, to their great alarm. There was no wind, so we soon came alongside; and when the astonished creatures found that we meant no harm, they gladly supplied us with water from cocoa-nuts, and pointed to a village where we could obtain plenty. Accordingly we pulled for the western shores of this third new island (named by us, after the senior lieutenant, Hayter Island), by the discovery of which we had now cut off in all forty miles from the supposed length of New Guinea.

As we approached the village numbers of canoes came out, but held aloof until they had communicated with their friends in the large trading canoe, when they became assured and crowded round us. One old bald-headed fellow jumped into the galley, and, patting me on the back, sat himself down, and pointed the way over the fringing shore reef to the village.

Here 200 or 300 natives waited our landing, carrying stone tomahawks, but not showing any spears or clubs. Women and children were among the crowd, so I did not hesitate to land at once, and leaving a party to guard the boats, took the rest up to a small stream, the natives carrying our barricoes, and helping us in every possible way. This done, we began to barter with them for their fine stone hatchets and provisions with our hoop-iron. We found the women (who were more ugly than can well be described, if it be not unchivalrous to say so!) much more difficult to trade with than the men; neither would they allow us to go near them as they sat on the verandas in front of their houses.

The southern entrance to China Straits is full of wooded islets, and to one of these, named by us Dinner Islet, less than a mile in length and 200 feet high, we went to dine apart from our savage friends; but we were followed by the fighting men to the number of about 100. As they seemed in no wise alarmed themselves, we only kept a little more together, and went on with our cooking.

We sat on the edge of the bush under the shelter of gigantic banyan-trees that dropped their hundred roots into the soil beneath the white coral sand; and this was a strategic position, for it kept the natives in our front, and prevented a surprise, a point I was always

particular in guarding, as savages are never wholly to be trusted. They squatted between us and the blue rippling water, watching all our proceedings with intense curiosity, and expressing utter disgust on tasting our dish, which was as delicious as ever explorers invented—a stew made of preserved soup and potatoes, salt pork, curlew, and pigeons. As we grew more friendly, several of our men got into the canoes to try their skill, and after a few attempts at paddling were ignominiously capsized, to the great amusement of the natives, while the rest of us were surrounded by inquiring groups, who opened the breasts of our shirts, and stroked our white skin with much wonder and admiration.

Alas! that this pearl of an islet should now be a convict establishment, with fetters and walls to bind those free-born savages who hailed us—the first white men they had ever seen—with so generous a welcome, and with no thought of the sorrows which our advent foretold!

The rest of the day was devoted to a cursory examination of China Straits, which almost convinced me that a passage would be found for the *Basilisk* to the unknown land, which, some twenty miles to the north, still gave no clue to its identity.

We were twenty miles from the ship, but by dint of hard pulling—Mourilyan and myself, with two men, taking spell and spell about at the oars with the other four men—and favoured occasionally by a little wind, we got back to the ship before midnight.

CHAPTER XXX

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—DISCOVERY OF MILNE BAY AND EAST CAPE

"Till now the name of names, England, the name of might,
Flames from the austral bounds to the ends of the boreal night;
And the call of her morning drum goes in a girdle of sound,
Like the voice of the sun in song, the great globe round and round."

W. E. HENLEY.

ON the morning of April 21 we got the ship under way, returning south through Fortescue Straits, now so completely eclipsed by China Straits, and passed to the westward along the south shores of Basilisk and Hayter Islands by a clear passage into China Straits.

We anchored in a bay on the western shores of Hayter Island, and beheld the beautiful scene with a full belief that our hopes of reaching the north side of New Guinea would now be realised.

The southern entrance to China Straits is guarded by the 1,000-foot heights of Heath Island and many islets. Turning from this and looking northwards, the eye rests first on two salient features at their entrance. On the left hand, a rounded, almost perpendicular mountain, dips from a height of 2,000 feet into the blue waters of the Straits. This is the real and majestic terminating-point of South-East New Guinea. It is covered with monotonous forest, and contrasts strongly with the many-valleyed and village-

sprinkled Hayter Island, which fronts it on the opposite side of the entrance, while on the far horizon to the north the view is closed by the purple peaks of the anxiously scanned but then unknown land.

Our further surveys showed China Straits to be some six miles in length by two in breadth, with an ample depth of clear water by which we could round the great headland, and sail, as I then thought, along the north coast of New Guinea to the westward.

But before making this venture, the importance of our discoveries led me to consider their bearing on Imperial interests. There lay the vast island of New Guinea, dominating the shores of Northern Australia, separated at one point by only twenty miles of coral reef from British possessions. Commanding as it does the Torres Straits passage and our newly discovered route for Australian trade to China, I felt that the occupation of any part of this island east of Torres Straits by an alien Power would be a standing menace to Australia.

I was also impressed by the richness and beauty of the new islands, and the number of their products —fine timber, cocoa-nut, the sago-palm, maize, jute, and various vegetable fibres—and my conclusion, after weighing all the considerations involved, was that it was my duty to take formal possession of our discoveries in the name of Her Majesty. Such a course secured a postponement of occupation by any Power till our Government could consider its own interests, and whilst the acquisition of these islands might commend itself, and my act result in annexation on the one hand, it might be easily negatived on the other by a neglect to confirm it.

On April 24 we made the best disposition we could

to give some little éclat to the ceremony of taking possession.

The trunk of a tall cocoa-nut-tree deprived of its crown, standing on the west beach of Hayter Island, was fitted with halyards to be used as a flagstaff. Officers, marines, and small-armed men landed under arms, and all standing uncovered, I read the following proclamation:

"I, John Moresby, Captain in the Royal Navy, commanding H.M.S. *Basilisk*, having discovered three considerable islands, from henceforth to be known as Moresby, Hayter, and Basilisk Islands, off the east coast of New Guinea, together with various groups of detached islets, and deeming that the possession of these islands may hereafter prove of considerable importance, do hereby, by right of discovery, take possession of all the aforesaid islands and islets lying within the parallels of 10° 25′ and 10° 40′ south latitude, and between the meridians of 150° 35′ and 181° 20′ east longitude, in the name and on behalf of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors, in token whereof I have hoisted and saluted the British flag on the shores of these islands.

"God save the Queen.

"H.M.S. *BASILISK*,
"POSSESSION BAY,
"HAYTER ISLAND,
"*April* 24, 1873."

The Jack was then run up and saluted amid three hearty cheers. All listened to the few sentences with attention and pleasure, for every man present had a right to identify himself with the work done.

A *feu de joie* was then fired, and I said: "Lads, in honour of what the old *Basilisk* has done, we will splice the main brace to-night." And so our little ceremony ended.

The natives present had watched our proceedings with amazement, little guessing how much their own future was involved, but the firing and cheering sent them off in a frightened scurry to the bush.

We named the bay Possession Bay in honour of the event, and here, at the foot of a mountain stream, we dug a deep well for the convenience of future visitors.

After the ceremony Dr. Haines and I started to reach the summit of the hill which bears his name. A native track led through a forest, and we came out quite unexpectedly on a small village. On a rocky ledge above the village stood a group of natives, armed with spears and wooden clubs. We were rather taken aback, for we were quite unarmed; but as we put on a bold face and walked towards them, making the usual grotesque sign of greeting, it overcame their hesitation, and eventually they consented to point out our way. The view from the top amply rewarded us for our climb. The more I gazed on its grandeur and beauty, the more persuaded was I that these islands would some day become English homes, for all the necessary conditions were here.

On April 25 we left China Straits by its northern entrance, and rounding the great bluff end of New Guinea, which we named the North Foreland, we considered ourselves now fairly to the north of that vast island and stood west, keeping close to the shore, for it was evident that the channel would not be a broad one which separated the unknown land, so often observed by us, from the north coast of New Guinea.

The shore that we were coasting was wooded and precipitously steep, with a depth of 90 fathoms at a cable's length from the beach.

Ten miles to the west of China Straits, a torrent, dashing down through a gorge, formed a small lagoon at its mouth, which offered the chance of an anchorage. The weather had turned out thick and squally; therefore, to wait for its improvement as well as to replenish our water, we stood in cautiously till our mastheads seemed almost to mingle with the dense foliage of an overhanging hill, and anchored in 18 fathoms off the entrance of the lagoon. After completing our watering we were weather-bound here for twenty-four hours, and some of us took occasion to climb up along the course of the torrent for two or three miles, but all was forest and jungle, full of an oppressive silence. We washed the sand in places for gold, but none was found. In a deep narrow valley we met a few natives, from whom we obtained bird-of-paradise plumes.

On April *27* we left this anchorage and continued our westerly course, through what we still supposed was a strait leading between New Guinea and the unknown land to the north. This was closing in, and soon was not more than eight miles distant; and as headland after headland opened out, all hands watched with interest for the secret to reveal itself. The officers were on the bridge, and the men crowded the bulwarks. It was one of those exciting moments which rarely occur and are never forgotten. The scene was indeed beautiful. The mountains had receded from the sea, and left behind them a strip of rich, level country, strewn with villages. Before us, to the north-west, lay a group of small islets in a stream of light from the setting sun. On the near shore the natives, excited beyond expression, raced along the black volcanic sand, brandishing club and spear as we passed. The mountain streams brought down floods of dis-

coloured waters, which we crossed with anxious hearts, not knowing what they might hide; but at last, passing another headland, we saw the blue distant hills to the westward meet the unknown land and touch; then we knew that we had only sailed up a great bay, and that the north side of New Guinea was yet to be reached.

My disappointment was extreme. I had set my heart on China Straits forming the north passage which Nature had seemed to intend it to be to the northern shores of New Guinea, but all was once more thrown into doubt and perplexity.

Pressing on, in hope of getting to an anchorage before dusk, we saw that the head of this great bay was closed to the west by a considerable extent of flat country, off which the waters were dotted with ugly-looking reefs; but our good star prevailed, and we opened a beautiful oval-shaped cove where stood a large village, lying about twenty miles west of China Straits, and here was just space enough for the *Basilisk*, accustomed as she now was to narrow waters. Passing so close to a lovely green point that the gesticulating natives might have thrown spears on our decks, we entered the little bay and anchored in 12 fathoms, our stern just swinging clear of the beach in 8 fathoms.

Words fail to describe the feeling of rest and satisfaction we felt on reaching such a secure haven after our work amongst unknown waters, when the responsibilities I had taken added to my anxieties.

The cove we had entered was fringed all round by graceful cocoa-nut palms. Pretty native houses were scattered amongst the trees, every one of which seemed to have sent forth its inmates to gaze on us. There was no unfriendliness. Canoes and catamarans

darted about us, bringing fine pigs and vegetables, which we gladly exchanged for our hoop-iron.

The next day half our men spent the afternoon on shore, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. I was laid up from the effect of sundry bruises and strains, but the head of the bay was surveyed and named, after the Senior Naval Lord of the Admiralty, Milne Bay, and the cluster of islets at its head, after the home of my childhood, The Allerford Group.

The next day we had to exercise manning and aiming boats outside Discovery Bay, as we named our anchorage. The natives crowded down to the point, curious as to what was to happen, and at the first report of the ringing Armstrong guns they shrieked in terror and fled. The panic seized the village; all valuables were hurriedly taken away, and every soul cleared out and made for the bush, except a few brave women, who, finding that no harm came to them, remained on the point and watched the firing to the end. It was well that they did so: otherwise we should have seen no more of the natives; but by their persuasions, and laughter and presents on our part, towards the evening the men came back, and confidence was restored.

As a rule, they traded honestly. Our method was to drop a piece of hoop-iron at the end of a cord into a canoe, on which the natives would touch one article after another till consent was nodded from the ship, and then they joyfully detached the iron, and tied on the pig or stone hatchet, or whatever had to be hauled up. Our men when on shore used freely to partake with them of their evening meal, eaten with exquisite little scoops made out of pearl shell. The women generally presided at the feast, and the men looked

well pleased to see the children receive their share in little cocoa-nut basins. It was amusing to watch our men come paddling off to the ship in catamarans and canoes, the natives screaming with delight as a clumsy stroke sent the frail craft rolling over. It must not be supposed that they were allowed to be at the mercy of the natives. Armed boat-keepers always kept the boats ready for instant use. The liberty men were told off into two companies, each under an officer, who had orders to keep the men generally together. These parties were subdivided into fours, which were ordered never to separate, and every second man carried fire-arms. It is a deeply gratifying reflection to me that during the constant intercourse maintained by our men with the natives, they never offered the slightest insult to or quarrelled with either man or woman. The war canoes were very remarkable, and were carefully kept under sheds. They were from 50 to 60 feet long, dug out of a single tree, with top-side planking laced on. The ends were ornamental, with high movable prow and stern pieces, grotesquely curved and painted, and decorated with floating cassowary feathers; while all round the sides of the boat strings of white cowrie-shells were looped, presenting altogether a very warlike and sensational aspect. Where does not art, that almost earliest instinct of man, exist?

We never saw any sign of religious observance amongst these people, unless cocoa-nuts hung on poles on the reefs or on their houses were intended as a propitiatory offering; but this we could not ascertain. And there was also a peculiar ceremony to which I shall presently allude. They had many pets—tame cassowaries, which ran about the village freely; several varieties of the (Wallis) custus; and

some exquisitely plumaged birds, which they kept in wicker cages.

Having completed our survey of this part of Milne Bay, we left our pleasant anchorage on April 30 to trace its northern shores to their eastern termination, the width of the bay here being about six miles. Unfortunately, the weather came on thick, and we were compelled to anchor amidst a group of islands some ten miles to the north-east of Discovery Bay, which we named Killerton Group. Their inhabitants at first seemed inclined to be troublesome, and met our boats in canoes waving their stone weapons and shouting defiantly. Some canoes full of fighting men came round Mourilyan's boat in a most threatening manner, but his resolution and good-temper told, and they began to consult with each other. Some paddled off to the shore, and presently returned, bringing one of the lean wolfish curs that infest their villages. They sprang up the side of the *Basilisk*, the leader carrying the dog in his arms, and dashed out its brains on the quarter-deck before anyone could stop him. On this all the natives changed their manners, and showed a desire to be friendly by making the usual uncouth greeting; but the ire of the officer of the watch was so kindled at seeing Her Majesty's quarter-deck defiled that the dog sacrificers were bundled out of the ship at once, and their victim thrown after them.

I had been below at the time, and was sorry to hear of this summary treatment, for I felt that the rite had doubtless either a religious and sacrificial meaning, or was intended as a seal of amity between us. I therefore went on shore immediately at a spot where a large crowd had assembled round the body of the dead dog in noisy consultation, and received so friendly a

welcome that my companion and I did not hesitate to go on to the village with our new acquaintances, who were painted in so extraordinary a manner as to look more like monkeys than men. They had black lines like spectacle-rims drawn round their eyes; one cheek and half the chin was painted white, and the other half and nose black. One old native led me by the hand for about a mile through plantations of sugar-cane, vegetables, palms and fruit-trees, to the village, placed at the foot of a high range of hills, and on the banks of a rapid stream. Many forest trees had been suffered to remain in the cleared ground about it, and had developed into more magnificent proportions than any I had before seen. Their girth at a man's height from the ground was about 30 feet, and 20 feet above began the foliage, and threw a shadow on the ground about 100 feet in diameter.

A large talking-house, about 60 feet long, stood in the centre of the village, and round it on a hard-trampled space the saddle-roofed houses were grouped; but we were not allowed to enter them, and for this I could discover no reason, as their women were all about us. Since they would not admit us, we leaned against a huge tree-trunk, and made signs that we were thirsty, when they brought us fresh cocoa-nut milk hospitably enough.

Returning to the ship, and having cursorily examined the channels between the islands, we resumed our course to the east, making for what was now seen to be the north-east point of New Guinea. To the east of Killerton Islands the great mountains dropped to low-wooded hills, and we began to feel that we were coasting a narrow neck of land, though the water on the other side could not be seen. Coral reefs and

broken water were visible ahead, but we pushed on, and were soon rewarded. The land had now narrowed to about a mile in width of low, undulating forest, sprinkled with villages. Suddenly an abrupt double-topped hill sprang upward to a height of 300 feet, with a village at its foot, half hidden in a grove of bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees, and two small flat coral islets off it; beyond them a broad strait rolled its waters for eight miles, till it washed the shores of the D'Entrecasteaux group.

My desire was fulfilled: the true terminating-point of New Guinea had at length been found. The D'Entrecasteaux Islands lay afar, distinctly separate, and ours were the first European eyes which had looked upon these things.

Continuing our course, I hoped to double East Cape, as we now called it, and to take the ship round to the northern shores of New Guinea; but immediately to the eastward of the Cape we fell amongst the reefs before seen, and being completely embayed by them, were compelled to seek a precarious anchorage to windward of one of the small coral islets off East Cape, on which a strong South-East Monsoon was blowing.

CHAPTER XXXI

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—RETURN TO SYDNEY

"Say it was thankless toil, yet was the labour glad;
Good were the strenuous days, joyous the hope we had.
Furrows our keel had ploughed deep in the barren sea,
Opened a wide world-way, and we achieved it—we!
Keep your rewards, forget us! Yet we have had our pay.
Yes, forget us; but follow where we have driven a way."

L. H.

NEW GUINEA, outlined as wedge-shaped on all our charts, was now known to be fork-shaped at its eastern extremity, the prongs being formed by the southern and northern shores of Milne Bay.

Our next efforts were directed to finding a channel round East Cape through the reefs which had so unfortunately obstructed us; but the more we searched, the clearer it became that no channel existed here. I was confident that a way would be found farther to the eastward, but I had neither time nor means to make it.

With great reluctance, therefore, I abandoned the idea of taking the ship farther, and thought that the elucidation of this part of the new route was reserved for some happier navigator; but the importance of such a discovery impressed itself on my mind, and I resolved to suggest in a private letter to Admiral Sir Alexander Milne the advantage of allowing me to find my way to England by the new route when the

ship should be ordered home, instead of by the usual course from Australia round Cape Horn. With this suggestion (of which the Admiralty approved) it was necessary to send duplicates of our hydrographical work, and these, reaching the Admiralty long before my official reports through the Commodore, elicited the following acknowledgments:

Sir Alexander Milne wrote:

"I am much obliged for the account of your proceedings at the south-east extreme of New Guinea. It is somewhat extraordinary that in the present day so little should be known of that part of the world. I have gone over the survey you have made, and been much interested in it. A copy has been sent to the Colonial Office. I am indeed obliged at your making me, as Senior Naval Lord, have a position in your *discoveries*. You are ordered home by the north side of New Guinea. We have acted on your private letter to the hydrographer, as your public letter would not reach us for some time."

Sir George Richards, the hydrographer, wrote:

"I have received your very valuable hydrographical information, with additions and new discoveries in New Guinea. At your suggestion *Basilisk* has been ordered home, to return via New Guinea, and follow up your former *discoveries*. Their Lordships are much pleased with the zeal and ability as evinced in the useful work you have performed. I will send you a copy of the chart as soon as the new work has been engraved."*

This chart, thus engraved, was headed:

"New Guinea, showing the discoveries obtained in H.M.S. *Basilisk*, Captain Moresby, R.N., 1873."

The *Basilisk's* discoveries were thus acknowledged by the highest naval authorities, and were admitted to

* The italics are my own.

possess a value which at the time I took too much for granted as a permanent expression of opinion.'

But to return to our good ship: she was resting uneasily at her exposed anchorage; a disagreeable sea was running, but still the natives came off in their frail canoes to barter.

The *Basilisk* could not double the East Cape, but her boats could, and on this course I resolved.

Taking Mr. Bentley in the galley, I rounded East Cape, and passing this we shot under the lee of the land, and found ourselves in a moment sheltered, and floating on a deep tranquil sea, ruffled gently by the monsoon.

Full of pleasant excitement, we lay on our oars to take in the exquisite scene revealed. Behind us the tall masts of the ship were rocking to and fro over the coral islet. To the eastward rose the D'Entrecasteaux Islands and the distant chain of our discoveries. Within 100 yards a large village lay amongst its palm and fruit trees, canoes floating before it full of anxious gazers. The eye travelled on and on to the westward, to the blue shadowy outlines of mountains perhaps 100 miles distant. The sight of a clear, reefless sea added to the exhilaration we felt, but it enhanced our disappointment in remembering that not to us would be given the honour of bringing a ship into these unknown waters, though, as I have said, my suggestion to the First Naval Lord relieved our present feeling of disappointment.

We steered to the west for several miles, along a shore more luxuriant and beautiful than words can describe; then returned and landed at East Cape, where the natives met us and led us to their village, spreading mats for us under the palm-trees.

They examined us from our hats to our shoes in the most minute manner, wondering over everything, especially at our white skins. The young women, who were agreeable enough in appearance, and had beautifully small hands and feet, were especially interested. We decorated some of the babies with strips of turkey-red, and with this our popularity became unbounded. We shared their evening meal, and returned to the ship voting the East Cape savages the pleasantest we had ever met. The next day, accompanied by Mourilyan, I made another expedition along the northern shores, taking a running survey as we went, and naming a distant cape seen by us Cape Basilisk. For the last time, we landed on East Cape amongst those friendly people. As I contemplated them I found myself drawing a contrast between the squalid poverty too often seen in England and the plenty and cleanliness which met us here at every step. Their dwellings lay in valleys rich as the Garden of Eden, and no man had to go a stone's throw from his own door to find all the necessities of his simple life. What have these people to gain from civilisation? Pondering on the fate of other aboriginal races when brought into contact with the white man, I was ready to wish that their happy homes had never been seen by us; but considerations of this kind cannot be entertained by those who see a simple duty before them and have means to execute it. We were not responsible for the issues, and Providence may surely be trusted to work out its own ends.

We left East Cape on May 3, running a fresh line of soundings across Milne Bay, and re-anchored in Possession Bay, where five days were spent in water-

ing and making a more minute examination of the surrounding seas.

On May 7 we weighed and stood south through China Straits, but wishing to ascertain whether a passage into China Straits existed on the west side of Heath Island, I took the ship out by this untried channel. We emerged safely, but had to pass over the tail of some dangerous reefs, which required much conning from aloft, and then, crossing the line of the sunken Barrier Reef in 17 fathoms and looking back, we could more easily understand from the configuration of the land how it was that our predecessors in these seas had mistaken the facts.

It was a relief to find our good ship once more rising and falling on the free ocean swell. The officers assembled in my cabin, and we pledged each other and the ship in bumpers of champagne.

A pleasant passage of ten days brought us to Somerset. Here Lieutenant Connor and Mr. Grant rejoined, after laborious work in Torres Straits, where they had spent two months in open boats, exposed to unusual severity of weather on a lee shore, during the South-East Monsoon; but, in spite of difficulties, they had accomplished a trigonometrical survey of 46 miles of the great Warrior Reef, and 148 miles of the south coast of New Guinea and islands, including those of Cornwallis and Saibai, which had been placed on the chart by the *Basilisk*. They had added so largely to the amount of our geographical work that I felt rewarded a hundred times over for the anxiety and responsibility I had accepted in detaching them in so unusual a manner.

We left Somerset on May 24, reaching Brisbane on June 24, where our discoveries caused no small stir,

and New Guinea was in everyone's mouth. From Lord Normanby and his Government I received unstinted congratulations, in which Navigating Lieutenant Connor had his well-deserved share. On July 2 our eventful six months' cruise came to an end, as we took up our old position in Farm Cove, Sydney.

The ship was, of course, thronged by people anxious to hear something about New Guinea, and to see the curiosities we had brought thence, and many of the seamen drove lucrative bargains with them. One in particular received £5 for a pig, which was immediately shaved by its purchaser, painted in stripes of different colours and otherwise decorated, when it was exhibited as a wonderful striped New Guinea pig, and sixpence charged for entrance, with a highly successful result. The Press also sang pæans in our praise, and we were immortalised in the Sydney *Punch.*

Officially all was not *couleur de rose.* The Commodore was in New Zealand, whence he sent his unqualified disapproval of my proceedings in New Guinea. He was equally condemnatory of my having employed Navigating Lieutenant Connor for the valuable survey in Torres Straits. It was disappointing, and I could only request that the question might be referred to the Admiralty for their decision. Their somewhat equivocal judgment was as follows: "That, although they could not approve of Captain Moresby's proceedings, yet it did not appear to their Lordships that he meant to disobey the orders under which he was acting."

At the same time the Commodore was directed to convey to me their Lordships' satisfaction and approval of the valuable work performed, and I was informed

that in due course the *Basilisk* was to return to New Guinea to complete the work she had begun. My good-fortune in getting the first word with the authorities probably led to a result different from that expected by my chief, but at the same time the disapproval expressed by the Admiralty was a bar to the *Basilisk* receiving any honour or reward. Such is the luck of the service. Had I elected for three months' idleness, I should have escaped censure and professionally been in a better position, but I should not have had the approval of my conscience, nor the reward I valued most as coming from men who (from their public interests and intuitive perception of the issues involved) were best able to judge. The Governor and Prime Minister of Queensland placed our discoveries on the level of a work of national importance, and their prescience has been amply justified, although they had to wait ten weary years before the home authorities adopted their view.

These views Lord Normanby forwarded to the Commodore, with a request that the thanks of his Government might be conveyed to me; but these were withheld until Commodore Goodenough had assumed the command, and then, thus encouraged, we felt our disappointment less keenly. Australia had spoken her approval, and we felt sure that our work would one day be recognised.

Before leaving Sydney, to the regret of all, our first lieutenant, Francis Hayter, was invalided, and his place taken by Lieutenant Sydney Smith, our popular second lieutenant.

Our next cruise was to New Zealand. Whilst there Commodore Goodenough arrived, and took command of the station. At once his grasp of mind, his self-

reliance, his happy way of taking his captains into his confidence, whilst always holding the reins himself, and of giving praise liberally where praise was due, produced the impression on all under him that here was a born leader of men.

At Auckland, on December 1, we were joined by Lieutenant Dawson, the surveying officer sent by the Admiralty, to place himself under my orders for the completion of our survey in New Guinea. He came provided with a complete set of the best surveying instruments, a contrast indeed to the small and well-worn supply which I had obtained three years before.

A few days later we sailed to join the Commodore at Fiji, to receive the final orders for our homeward route via New Guinea.

On December 21, at 1 a.m., we were standing for Levuka with a light fair breeze, when we unsuspectedly found ourselves close to a dangerous reef, having been swept twelve miles out of our reckoning by an unexpected current. Before the ship could answer her helm she was on the reef, and lay there bumping heavily.

It was six hours before we could get her off—a terribly anxious time. For some hours I thought the old craft's days were numbered, but as the fine weather happily continued, the efforts we made were successful.

On arrival at Levuka I was gratified by finding the Commodore approved of my having left New Zealand, and expressed his satisfaction with the measures taken to rescue the *Basilisk* from the reef. His interest in the success of our further explorations of New Guinea was keen, and he was prepared to help me to carry out my views, and to aid me with his own valuable advice.

CHAPTER XXXII

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—PIONEER ROUTE—HOME VIA NEW GUINEA

"Look out, look out, my trusty crew!
Strain every anxious eye.
Though spray and mist obscure the view,
We know the land is nigh."

Old Song.

THE *Sandfly*—schooner, Lieutenant Nowell commanding—was ordered to accompany me to New Guinea, and the Commodore kindly offered to place the *Rosario* (a steam corvette) also under my orders but this I declined.

On December 26, 1873, the flag-ship, accompanied by the *Basilisk*, left Levuka. We met the mail from Sydney outside, and my signal was made to receive sailing orders for England, first going to Sydney to refit, and then home by the new route which I had suggested, remaining two months to survey our former discoveries.

These discussed with my chief, I stood on his quarter-deck, and as he took my hand in his and said "Dear old boy, good-bye," I little thought I should never again feel that strong, faithful grip in this world. I left him all unknowing, and then, with the signal "Farewell" flying at the *Pearl's* masthead, we parted company.

Eighteen months later a cable from Sydney reached England announcing the Commodore's death.

I was then at home, and my wife, suffering from the illness which a few weeks later caused her death, had laid all literary work aside; but the national and personal loss affected her beyond resistance, and the following poem was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* at the time—the last she ever wrote.

"JAMES GRAHAM GOODENOUGH, COMMODORE.

"The sad ship hastened; but as three bells struck,
Its high recall the sailor's spirit heard;
He smiled, and from our hands, that would have held,
He passed at once, obedient to the word.

"The sea soft leaping at his vessel's side,
Its pulses beating boundless sympathy
With his that sank, its farewell in his ear—
Where should a seaman die but on the sea?

"He failed of home, those dear last words that fall
Before the immortal silence as we part;
But home came round his pillow, fondly drawn
By strong compulsion of that faithful heart.

"The spirit swift to plan, the manly will
To follow on and do, the voice to lead
In war or council: we must mourn for these—
They had been ready at his country's need.

"But most for him, the man of childlike heart,
Who rang so true to every test of good,
Whose nature held a rare heroic fire,
With the soft mood of gentle Collingwood.

"It was not his to tread a glorious deck,
To stay its thunders ere his spirit passed,
And through the lifting murk of battle see
The alien flag come slowly down the mast.

"It was not his, the calm of ended toils
(Thus called at noon, ere half his task was done),
The voice of children's children in the warmth,
The ripening warmth of life's low evening sun.

"But fate was kind—he died upon his post,
Holding the olive in his hand to draw
An outcast race, stubborn, unpurposed, blind,
To the fair brotherhood of light and law.

"Nor saint* nor sailor died in vain who strove
This citadel of heathen hearts to reach;
Fresh hands shall raise the olive from the dust
Where they have left their bodies in the breach.

"Nay, not in vain; but they shall have a joy
For every link they laid in the great plan
That seeks to draw the scattered nations home,
And shape the perfect family of man.

"JANE MORESBY."

We reached Sydney on January 6, and found the public interest in our expedition so keen that it more discouraged than cheered me, knowing as I did how short a time the Admiralty had placed at my disposal. But for this there was now no help.

My experience in former cruises having shown me that a steam pinnace was a necessity, I resolved to buy one, and reimburse myself by selling it at Amboyna, taking my chance in the matter; but I was unable to see anything suitable, and eventually the New South Wales Government supplied me with a useful little steam cutter, and we were also provided with an abundance of saws and axes, which I foresaw would often be a necessity in the work before us.

H.M. schooner *Sandfly* sailed for Possession Bay, New Guinea, on January 30, and the next day the *Basilisk* also left. It was a wild day, but numbers of people came down the rocky point of Farm Cove to see us off, and the ship was crowded with friends of the officers and men. As the anchor came to the bows

* Bishop Patteson was also killed by the poisoned arrows of the Santa Cruz islanders two years previously.

our men sprang aloft with flags, and running out on the yard-arms and up to the masts' heads, waved them for farewell. This was answered with cheer on cheer from the shore, which we heartily returned, and then we went on our way, our homeward-bound pennant streaming 80 yards astern.

At Brisbane we were much encouraged by the hearty interest taken by Lord Normanby and his Government in the proposed work. Their sense of its importance was inspiriting in the extreme. Finally, we left Australian shores on February 9, and steered for Teste Island.

On February 17 we met a strong north-west gale, when a great sea swept over the forecastle, and with it went our gallant boatswain. A boat's crew sprang at once into the quarter-boat to go to the rescue. For an instant I was agitated by as painful a doubt as can assail a seaman, as to whether I could permit the attempt to be made: the chances were so heavy against these nine brave lives in the boat; but a look to windward decided me, for Mr. Mudge was striking out valiantly, and as he rose on the top of a great wave he shouted out cheerily, "I am all right, sir"—an unselfish thought indeed at such a moment, and a bright example to us all.

The boat got away safely, and the issue for life or death was watched breathlessly from the ship. Hope sank, for our shipmate was exhausted before it could reach him, and lay floating deeply; but at last the cry arose, "They have him!" and, thank God, it was true, though he had sunk below the surface. Never was a heartier welcome on board.

On February 20 we passed Bell Rock, and through a grey watery mist made out the well-remembered

peaks and outlines of a no longer unknown land with a thrill of gratification, remembering our work done, and feeling that we were returning to complete it in honourable circumstances. That evening we rode at anchor in Hoop-Iron Bay, surrounded by hundreds of friendly natives, who recognised us with shouts of welcome.

Six weeks only lay at our disposal. I resolved to begin by making a trigonometrical survey of the space between Teste Island and East Cape, so as to decide at the outset the important question of whether an available entrance to the new route existed here or no.

O'Neill Island was the pivot for our survey, and during all this time our steam pinnace was an unceasing wonder to the natives. On one occasion Lieutenant Smith took about fourteen of their canoes in tow, and the owners shouted with pleasure until he blew the steam-whistle, when their consternation was extreme. Becoming accustomed to it, they landed, and collected their women on the beach, and made signs that they wished the whistle to be blown, which was done, and the men, affecting the utmost unconcern, were highly amused at the terror of the women, who fled in dismay, scattering like a flock of birds to shelter. This typically masculine trait amused us all.

Amongst our many necessary duties was one of making surveying stations on various lofty points, and all these were so thickly wooded that regular expeditions had to be made to clear a horizon for the theodolite.

The summit of Glenton, a small island 400 feet high, was attacked by a party of forty men armed with axes and saws. It was easy at first, for we could pass between the trees, but soon the dense undergrowth

closed in, and every foot of the way had to be cut through creepers and bushes. Streaming with perspiration and tormented with mosquitoes, we found ourselves at last at the summit on a narrow platform. We were hidden in a gloom which the sun could not penetrate, and it seemed a task for Hercules to clear away the mass of obstruction; but the strong arms of our men soon let in daylight. Axes rang and saws grated cheerfully, and every now and then came the cry "Stand clear," as a big tree bowed its head and toppled over, crushing down the underwood in its fall, and thus doing double service. In a few hours all the trees except a giant which we left to crown the summit had fallen, and the theodolite was free to sweep the horizon. We were proud of our work, yet gazed on it with some ruth in thinking of the years it would take Nature to replace those leafy shades.

Below us, at the foot of the precipice, the light waves curled on a coral beach, and on every side island after island floated on the calm of an intensely blue sea. Every variety of form and tint of light and shadow abounded in the near islands, whilst those beyond faded out as they distanced into dim shapes, faint clouds, very dreams of islands, giving a sense of the profusion of creative power that was almost overwhelming.

Leaving Lieutenant Dawson to take his round of angles, I visited a group of four islands about nine miles off—the east end of Moresby Island, named by us Engineer Group—and whilst there we witnessed an attack on these islands by four large war canoes from the mainland. They came on in line abreast, their warriors standing on a platform deck, armed with spears, slings, and heaps of stones at their feet! The

islanders, nothing loath, were armed in like manner, the lower part of their bodies protected by a large conch-shell, and, wading into the water, rushed to meet their enemies. Volleys of stones were slung and spears thrown, but it was essentially a long-range fight, and they dodged each other's missiles so skilfully that very little damage, so far as we could see, was done to either side. Finally, when all the stone ammunition was exhausted, the canoe-men paddled off towards the New Guinea coast, followed by the derisive yells of the islanders. Certainly if they were cannibals they carried back no game with them. The whole episode was extremely interesting.

On March 3, after unremitting work of officers and men, Lieutenant Dawson and I had satisfied ourselves that the passage round East Cape was not through China Straits, but round the east end of Moresby Island, and on this day I had the satisfaction of conning the ship through a passage we had found and round East Cape. This was a point gained, but in one place it so narrowed between dangerous reefs that I was not satisfied. Once more I resolved to strain every nerve in searching for a better passage. Boats were too low in the water to be of much use; therefore our plan was that the ship should start in the early morning and take a zigzag course to avoid the sun's level rays, sounding as she went, whilst boats were used at intervals to carry out lines of soundings between two fixed points. I almost lived aloft those days. The anxious moments came when a cloud no bigger than a man's hand appeared on the horizon and speedily enveloped us in a tropical tornado, which sometimes lasted two hours. Anxious hours they were indeed, as we drove across the rain-pitted sea—now over the

safe blue of the deep water, now over the treacherous shoaling green of the reefs, the leadsmen, like messengers of fate, in the chains calling their soundings, shut in all round by gloom that no eye could pierce, seeing nothing but the coral below, which seemed to lift itself up to meet us. It was difficult as the man at the bowsprit end reported "Water shoaling" to answer with a sufficiently cheery "Very well." The men cowered in their light clothing from the pitiless rain, which was cold and sharp as hail; our ears were full of the confusion of the elements and the roar of the escaping steam, all in strange contrast with the sunny calm which had just preceded it.

The result of our work was a success. We found a passage, the least width of which was two miles, leading from Teste Island to the north of New Guinea. This satisfied me, but much more remained to be done.

On March 4 we proceeded to survey the D'Entrecasteaux group. These islands, which rise to the height of 7,000 feet, had been seen from a distance on their eastern side by the French navigator whose name they bear, but had not been otherwise explored. We named the lofty mountains of the southern island Prevost Range, and, landing at a large village, we overcame the fears of the natives and were welcomed, whilst they offered us hot and savoury food from their large earthen bowls. Here for the first time human figures painted on the gable ends of the larger houses were seen by us; the artists' skill was of the rudest, and the subjects highly indecorous.

So much surveying work had now been done that it became needful for Lieutenant Dawson to discontinue practical work and place the accumulated results on the chart. This would occupy him a week, and I determined

to spend the time in making a running survey of the D'Entrecasteaux Islands.

We found a small bay on their western shores, where the ship had barely room to swing clear of the reefs. Trap Bay, as we named it, is exposed to westerly winds, but it was the best we could find.

In the steam pinnace I then examined the coast to the north, and found what I thought to be an extensive bay, but which afterwards proved to be a broad strait separating the two southern islands of the D'Entrecasteaux group. A westerly gale springing up, we had an anxious time before regaining the ship. Nor were our anxieties then lessened, for on a dead lee shore the reefs were but 15 yards from our stern. For two days we were kept in this critical position, but at last, with thankful hearts, we left Trap Bay, and, standing north, entered the wide straits named by us Dawson Straits. We ran along the south shores under the volcanic peaks of Normanby Island, as we named the southern island, and the northern island we called Fergusson, after the Governor of New Zealand. Rounding a cape 4,000 feet high, the sea beyond revealed itself through a cluster of islets.

For the night we found an anchorage off a dark sandy beach, through which a mountain stream cut its way to the sea. The beach was fringed with jungle and forest trees, but casting our eyes up the precipitous mountain-side, we saw abundant cultivation.

Presently the men came crowding to the beach, armed with clubs and spears. Mr. Bentley and I landed and walked up to the astonished savages, gave them some presents, and patted them on the back; in fact, by this time we had gained such experience in the management of savages that we felt confident of succeeding with

them, and, indeed, they soon became friendly. Returning to the ship, we carried with us the spears and clubs which had perhaps been intended for use against us. From this time, during the week we spent here, the ship was besieged by hundreds of canoes from far and near, eager to barter all they possessed for hoop-iron.

Our seamen made themselves popular with their dusky friends by getting them on board and colouring them with quaint devices in tar and paint. Those thus ornamented became objects of such envy and admiration that only too many candidates for Jack's fancy presented themselves. We gave them an alarm on one occasion by sending the men aloft suddenly to loose sails. In a moment their canoes began to fly, crushing against each other, till, when about 100 yards off, they turned, and, seeing no harm was intended, laughed immoderately at their fears as they swarmed on board again.

Leaving Lieutenant Dawson to plot his work and the first lieutenant to wood and water the ship, I took the steam pinnace, with Mourilyan, and, towing the gig carrying coals and provisions for a week, steamed out of Dawson's Straits to the west. Then, turning north, we passed along the western shores of Fergusson Island, and found ourselves at the entrance of another noble strait, separating Fergusson from the northern and loftiest island of the group, to which there and then I gave the name of Goodenough, after our Commodore. This strait—Moresby Strait—is from eight to ten miles wide and fifteen in length. Its shores are grandly beautiful, Mount Goodenough rising to a height of 8,000 feet. The sides of this great mountain are cultivated to a range of about 2,000 feet, but gradually its woods give place to

barrenness, and its summits stand bare and knife-edged against the sky, while from the lonely heights mountain torrents dash down its ravines, and flash out from their dark green setting like molten silver. Night now closing, we sought to anchor between a small islet and the shore. Our draught of water was hardly 2 feet, yet we could obtain no anchorage, for the mushroom coral rose like great pillars close together within a few inches of the surface, so that after many wearying trials off the entrance of lovely coves and delicious-looking bays, we only found a precarious anchorage in 20 fathoms outside these coral pillars, on which a dangerous surf was breaking. The natives then crowded alongside, but we were weary and wanted to have our evening meal in peace, so we blew the steam whistle, and they glided off into the darkness. All night long the village clamoured like a frightened rookery, and our look-out men were frequently startled by natives stealing out within a few feet of us on the reef, until at last, sleep being needful, I caused a rifle to be fired to windward, and so got some quiet.

Next day we attempted to pass round the north-west shores of Goodenough Island. We failed for want of fuel, and the labour of constantly filling the boiler with fresh water caused much delay.

In the evening we anchored in a little creek, off a rock-strewn watercourse, with delicious pools of cool water, in which we bathed, to our great refreshment. A naturalist would have envied our position, surrounded as we were by trees, shrubs, and beautiful birds, to which our ignorance could give no name. We knew the megapode, and recognised it here—a bird like a small barn-door fowl, with long yellow legs,

the nests consisting of about thirty cartloads of dry leaves and sticks formed into a great heap, the heat of which would hatch the eggs deposited. We were awakened in the morning by the discordant scream of many birds; then, crossing the straits to Fergusson Island, we landed at a large village, and saw the sago-palm growing in rich abundance. The natives mash the sago in immense troughs, which I at first thought to be worn-out canoes. We all enjoyed this food, and used it largely.

The good feeling of these natives deserves mention. They had never seen the *Basilisk*, and knew nothing of our possessing superior arms. We were but ten amongst hundreds, and they knew that we carried hoop-iron, more precious to them than diamonds, on our persons; but not only did they refrain from the least attempt to molest us, but they helped us over obstacles, showed us the best paths, and took care of our clothes whilst we bathed. Alas! that the worst vices of so-called civilisation have since changed all this charity and courtesy into hatred! Turning east we anchored for the night at a snug bay on the north side of the island, and, landing, shot a wallaby. We discovered here some boiling mineral springs, strongly alkaline, which united themselves into a rivulet that offered any degree of temperature to our luxurious bathers. In the sand and mud thrown out by these springs we found small specimens of rubies and amethysts—apparently chippings from larger stones.

We made two attempts to circumnavigate Fergusson Island, east about, but each time were met by a south-east gale, accompanied by a heavy ocean sea, which placed us in considerable danger; and finding from the unexpected trend of the land that we were still thirty

or forty miles from the ship, we bore up and determined to make a fair wind of the gale by returning the way we came. We spent the night in a sheltered bay abounding with turtle, and next morning, our coal being expended, cut wood, and with this fuel managed to make twenty miles, reaching the village we had previously visited in Moresby Straits, where we spent a comfortable night.

Next day, at the entrance of Dawson Straits, we had the pleasure of seeing the *Basilisk* coming towards us, our prolonged absence having caused Lieutenant Smith some anxiety. The cleanliness, free space, and comfort of the ship were very welcome after our hardships, and we were able to feel with pleasure that we had done a good piece of work in laying down the principal part of the before unknown coast-line of these islands which lie in the track of the new route.

On April 8 we resumed our old anchorage at Possession Bay, to wait the arrival of a vessel with coal and stores from Sydney.

The *Sandfly* was here, and we found the natives had committed the bold act of stealing her barricoes and boats' crutches. I had always been ready to overlook their smaller delinquencies, but this was going too far, and I directed Lieutenant Nowell, her commander, to lay an ambush and seize some natives near the spot where the robbery had been committed. Two were accordingly secured after a long struggle, and were taken on board the *Sandfly* in a panic of terror, expecting instant death. Their wives and friends came off, and the natives immediately deserted the ship and kept close to the shore in their canoes.

I went amongst them, and at last succeeded in making them understand that the prisoners would be

set free when the property was brought back. This needed consideration and much consultation, but on the second day they restored the articles, and we released the men, to the intense joy of their friends, by whom presently a large hog was sent on board the *Sandfly* as a testimony of gratitude.

A few days after a saw was missed, but before we could take any steps a canoe came off, in which an old man stood holding up the saw, and on reaching us he expressed his anger at the theft.

The coal vessel now having arrived, we were gladdened by home news—five months old, it is true, but none the less welcome. The *Sandfly* had meanwhile developed serious defects, and had to return to Sydney with the coal barque.

During the following ten days we found a still more roomy but longer route from Teste Island to the north side of New Guinea, running eastward of the whole archipelago of islands lying off the East Cape.

Our work off East Cape, when it was summed up, resulted in the laying down of more than 2,000 miles of fixed soundings and a trigonometrical chart of all the adjacent islands and coast-line.

We felt that our desires of last year in this respect were now fulfilled, and that the *Basilisk* had opened an accurately surveyed highway for commerce between Australia, Northern New Guinea, and China.

CHAPTER XXXIII

H.M.S. "BASILISK" (*continued*)—SURVEY OF THE UNKNOWN NORTH-EAST NEW GUINEA COAST

"Because I have been athirst, I have dug a well,
That others may drink."

Arab Aphorism.

I EARNESTLY wished to remain longer and carry our surveys farther to the eastward, but I had already exceeded the time allowed me by a fortnight, and there remained a running survey of the unknown north-east coast for about 300 miles as the crow flies to be accomplished; a length which was certain to be much extended by the irregularities of the coast-line.

We therefore turned the *Basilisk's* head westward on April 27, 1874, amidst great rejoicings, for every mile was now a mile nearer home.

At this time we were attacked by low fever, which completely prostrated its victims, and rendered our subsequent work more arduous, the more so as we were already forty men short of the complement.

The first striking difference between these northern and the southern shores of New Guinea is that there is no outlying Barrier Reef, and that the shores, instead of shelving outward, are steep to. Speaking generally, the coast-line may be indicated as a series of bold headlands, running out twenty to forty miles seaward, with deep bays between, a configuration which doubled the work to be done.

The passage between East Cape and the D'Entrecasteaux Islands was named by us Goschen Straits. From East Cape the coast trends for sixty miles west-north-west; then the first of the great headlands of North New Guinea projects for twenty-five miles to the eastwards, to within fifteen miles of Goodenough Island, and forms Ward Hunt Straits and Goodenough Bay, as we respectively named them. The promontory became Cape Vogel, after the Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Between East Cape and Cape Vogel there is a coastline of about 100 miles, along with a depth of 500 to 600 fathoms at about two miles from the shore

Our course now lay round the southern shores of Goodenough Bay. Twenty miles west of East Cape we found a good anchorage in Bentley Bay, and remained there for a day to explore the surrounding country. The natives had evidently heard of us from their fellow-countrymen to the eastward, for they received us joyfully, and brought us off numbers of pigs.

Landing with a small party, I climbed the precipitous hills, 2,000 feet high, and looked across to Milne Bay. The land between was fairly cultivated and watered by many streams, and to the west we could see great mountains, perhaps 100 miles distant.

After a long, tiresome scramble through the thick forest, where we were indebted to the natives for guidance, we got back to the village off which the ship was anchored, suffering a good deal from the severe stings of the tree-ants that had attacked us in the trees we were compelled to climb in order to take observations.

That night on board was marked by a mutiny amongst our numerous pigs. They were securely

penned, and remained quiet enough till the middle watch, when they suddenly seemed to become as demoniac as their Jewish predecessors of old, leapt out of the pens, and rushed, squealing and grunting, to the gangways. The men, who were all sleeping on deck, were quickly on the alert to save their future dinners. The pigs rushed wildly between their legs, capsizing them in all directions; but numbers prevailed in the end, and they were secured, one only escaping overboard. We never understood the reason of this *sauve qui peut.* On April 29 we left Bentley Bay. From this point commenced our running survey, during which the position of every prominent point on the coast was exactly fixed, the coast-line between carefully sketched in, and soundings laid down. I also kept steadily to my custom of communicating with the natives whenever possible.

Beyond Cape Ducie and Chads Bay (so named after my old chief, Sir Henry Ducie Chads) the forest ceases, and is succeeded by an openly wooded plateau full of villages, which is backed two miles inland by a range of grassy hills. Farther to the west is Cape Frere, a noble headland, and the *Basilisk* looked like a mere cock-boat in its shadow, as, almost scraping her sides against the beetling mass, she stood in to seek for an anchorage in Bartle Bay. After much seeking, we found an anchorage in 49 fathoms (a depth greater than that of the English Channel midway), with our stern just swinging clear of the beach. In a river at the head of the bay we searched, but could find no trace of gold, nor was any seen by us on the north coast.

About 120 unarmed natives streamed along the beach to meet us on our landing, the foremost carrying

the sacrificial dog, and others a pig; but they were timid. When they gained confidence they dashed the dog's brains out against the gunwale of our boat, and took the body on board the *Basilisk*, where it was received with all respect.

The next day we sailed for the bight of Goodenough Bay over a tranquil sea, for the monsoon blowing on the south side of New Guinea was arrested by the lofty Owen Stanley Range, the summits of which were now always obscured with heavy clouds, that told of troubled waters on the weather side of the peninsula.

Our track lay about two miles from the shore, and our faithful little ally, the steam pinnace, kept abreast of us within half a mile of the beach—a plan followed through this whole remaining survey, as enabling us to lay down a double line of soundings simultaneously.

Passing Cape Vogel, we found anchorage for the night of May 2 amidst a small group of islands, named by us Jabbering Islets, on account of the natives surrounding us at night and giving us no rest till we fired a rifle over their heads, when they vanished away into the gloom.

The coast from Cape Vogel again trends west-north-west for nearly fifty miles, with the usual aspects of the low wooded plain, with mountains rising behind. Then another lofty promontory runs out for forty miles to the north-east, and forms with Cape Vogel a second spacious bay. A double-peaked mountain rises 4,000 feet high from this promontory. Altogether the features were so striking that I resolved to honour them with great names. The cape, therefore, is Cape Nelson, the two summits of the mountain are Mounts Victory and Trafalgar, and the bay is Collingwood

Bay. At the head of Collingwood Bay we remained two days cutting wood.

We found the natives here less friendly. The steam pinnace, whilst surveying at the head of the bay, was chased by a large number of canoes, holding thirty or forty men each; but the officer in command did not think it prudent to let them come near, and may therefore have been mistaken in thinking their intentions hostile.

Bounding Cape Nelson the land again trended westward. The natives here were absolutely naked, and repulsive-looking in the extreme; they were of a darkish colour, and wore their hair in long ugly ringlets like pipe-stems. Their canoes were of a kind new to us, being 40 or 50 feet long, but so exceedingly narrow that a man could barely squeeze into them! Besides the usual out-rigger, they had balancing spars on the opposite side, supporting a fighting stage, on which five or six men could stand. In hope of making friends, I coaxed some natives to bring their canoes alongside my galley, and should have succeeded but that my coxswain unfortunately began to coil up the lead-line, when, thinking they were about to be made fast, they instantly paddled off.

Having failed on the water, we landed and visited the village, whence the natives had fled and taken every article with them; but one of us had a spear thrown at him by an unseen arm. These people had no human bone ornaments like those to the eastward.

West of Cape Nelson a third large bay succeeded, which I named Dyke Acland, after my old friend the late Sir Thomas Dyke Acland.

The western point of this bay I named Cape Sud-Est, in order to retain the name given by D'Entre-

casteaux to an inland height which he had mistaken for a cape. West of Cape Sud-Est the land runs north-west for forty miles, then another promontory projects for fifteen miles to the north-east, and is the western point of Holnicote Bay. The promontory I named Caution Point, on account of the uncertain soundings we obtained.

We anchored about half a mile from the shore opposite a considerable village, which was immediately plunged into the wildest excitement. Conches were blown, and a tumultuous gathering of armed savages took place on the beach opposite the ship. It happened to be one of our penny reading nights, and they evidently took the singing and loud chorus, borne to them across the waves, for a defiance, for they chanted back a war-song in return. In the morning I went in my galley and made an attempt to be friendly; but, unfortunately, a surf was running on the beach, which made it imprudent to land, uncertain as we were of the disposition of the natives, whose excitement became intense as we neared them.

About 100 men awaited us, armed with spears, stone clubs, and shields, and ornamented with bird of paradise plumes on their shoulders, bedaubed with white and red pigments on their stark-naked bodies. Many of them were springing into the air and brandishing their weapons. Some waded out waist-deep, shaking their spears at us, totally unaware of our power to hurt them. Selecting one of these bold fellows, I let the boat drift slowly towards him, and stood with arms wide open, one of the men holding out a piece of red cloth on the end of a boat-hook as a present. We succeeded in getting four or five to come close and take our presents, but they would give

nothing in return. Suddenly they seized our boat and tried to drag us on shore, evidently with no good intention, and as there were no women or children about, I decided on not landing. It was rather a critical moment, for the men holding our boat were very muscular, and we shook them off with difficulty. It was evident that as we went westward our dealings would be with a fiercer race of savages.

Leaving Caution Point, steering west-north-west for twenty-five miles, we kept a sharp look-out for a large island shown on the chart as Ritchie Island, so named by D'Entrecasteaux.

The position assigned to it lay in our track, but no island was found. A point of land near its supposed position I named Cape Ward Hunt. Rounding this cape, the land again trends westward, and we saw before us a large river discharging itself over a dangerous bar; immediately to the west of it was a beautiful bay running up to a sandy beach, fringed with groves of trees admirably adapted for firewood, of which we were now much in need. Here we anchored, about 100 yards from the beach, in 13 fathoms, and were rather glad that no villages were at hand. In the evening some large canoes from the river neared the ship, but refused to communicate. They slowly paddled round, chanting a monotonous tune and beating time with their paddles on the sides of their canoes.

Our men replied by mimicking the chant, and the savages listened with a dignified silence that provoked roars of laughter from the *Basilisk*.

The following morning the men were employed in wooding, and I was writing in my cabin, when it was reported to me that three of our officers had strayed

from the wooding party about a mile along the beach, and a large number of armed natives had landed from canoes, and were stealing through the bush, with the evident intention of attacking them. We could see from the ship the natives gliding through the underwood, but the imperilled officers could not, and were quite unaware of their approach. Sub-Lieutenant Shortland and I jumped into the dinghy, with some spare rifles, and gained the beach just in time to give our shipmates the rifles and put them on their guard. Hoping to maintain friendly relations, I advanced for about 20 yards alone, armed with a rifle, but holding my arms over my head, toward the bush where the natives were now lurking. Suddenly they sprang from the bush to the open beach, and formed in two regular lines 10 yards in my front, the first line of men armed with spears, which they held quivering to throw, whilst they moved with a short, quick step from side to side, as if to distract an enemy's aim, guarding themselves with shields. The second line was armed with clubs. For a second I forebore to fire, hoping to win them round; but finding this hopeless, and that in another second I should be a target for fifty spears, I fired with a snap-shot at the leading savage. The bullet pierced his shield and spun him round on his heel, but did not wound him. There was no need to fire again, for the whole body of warriors turned instantly in the utmost consternation and ran for the canoes, whilst we followed till we drove them on board, and sent them flying up the river, sustaining their panic by dropping rifle-shot abreast of their canoes till they were out of range.

This river was named by us the Clyde. Unfortunately, the dangerous bar at its mouth prevented

our entering to explore it, and the jungle was too thick to do so on foot. Its breadth was about 60 yards, and its current clear and steady. Its banks abounded in pigeons.

Having got about 40 tons of wood on board, we left the bay on May 10. This bay, which will prove one of the best anchorages on the coast, we named Traitors' Bay.

Leaving Traitors' Bay we stood west, Mourilyan in the steam pinnace doing good service, as usual, by examining the coast in shore. Passing several small rivers where alligators were basking, we opened a bay, where we anchored in 5 fathoms near a group of islets. The former we named Hercules Bay, and the latter, after the captain of Sheerness Dockyard, Luard Islets.

On the west side of Hercules Bay the coast, running north-west, altered its character entirely, the low alluvial land giving place to volcanic hills that came precipitously down to the water's edge.

Numerous volcanic islands were scattered off the coast. We saw no signs of inhabitants here. Twenty miles farther to the north-west we reached Longuerue (?) Island of D'Entrecasteaux, situated at the southern entrance to the great Huon Gulf, from which point the coast-line had been more or less accurately traced by the old navigators.

Our work now was virtually done; my great desire had been attained, and England had won the honour of exploring the last extensive unknown coast-line in the habitable world, and completing the work begun by Dampier about 1699, and continued by D'Entrecasteaux a century later.

Near Longuerue Island we opened a bay, where

was a fine clump of tall mangrove-trees free from jungle. Here we remained three days engaged in our last wood-cutting service. The men, divided as usual into axe-men, sawyers, and carriers, attacked the timber with their old spirit. The labour of wood-cutting, in itself arduous, was so exhausting under a tropical sun that everything was done on such occasions to excite a healthy emulation.

The different parties were aided by most of the officers, including myself, and we felled and sawed with the rest. At first many received ugly wounds before becoming used to the tools, but our greatest annoyance all through was from the ants with which the New Guinea trees swarmed. They were of many and various kinds, but one and all attacked us so fiercely that at times we had to leave the victory with them, and choose some other spot. Often we had to screw up all our powers of endurance; the officers led the assault, as if it had been a boarding party, until we came off triumphantly with our wood, but bleeding and with skins full of the forceps of these creatures. During the cruise we cut about 700 tons of hard tropical wood, to save our coal. This fact, when our small numbers are considered, as well as the ceaseless boat-work and deep-sea sounding in which they were engaged, will give some idea of the zeal shown by the *Basilisk's* fine crew.

A study of the chart disclosing that the coast-line for 250 miles to the west, as far as Astrolabe Gulf, was but slightly known, I resolved to continue our survey to that point.

We left Death Adder Bay, as we named it, and steered north-west along the southern shores of Huon Gulf, well cultivated and crowded with villages, whose

inhabitants paddled after us in canoes, making every sign of friendship; but we could not delay to visit them, much to my regret. On May 15 I went to examine a river which discharges a large body of water into the head of Huon Gulf, but again a bar at the entrance prevented our boats passing up, and the shortness of the time at our disposal prevented other attempts. We named it Markham River, after the able secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, and the lofty mountains bounding the southern shores of Huon Gulf, Rawlinson Range, after the president of the same society. Many canoes came to us, and boldly ventured alongside to barter tortoiseshell, yams, cocoa-nuts, and dogs. They seemed to us to have a knowledge of white men, and did not hesitate to come on board freely. This day was an unfortunate one for us, for our invaluable steam pinnace broke down hopelessly, and was afterwards useless.

Rounding Cape Cretin, we stood north-west, having the high mountainous land of New Britain in sight to the north. We were chased by many canoes, whose crews vociferated to us to stop and barter; but the wind was fresh and fair, and I was too anxious to economise fuel to gratify them. The air being beautifully clear, we were able to measure the altitudes of the Finisterre Range. Facing each other boldly were two peaks, far above all compeers, 11,400 feet high. Their relative position and their greatness suggested irresistibly the names I gave them—Mounts Gladstone and Disraeli. In connection with this, I wrote to each of those eminent men for permission to confirm my action, and in due course I received the following replies, which in no small measure are characteristic of the humour

of Disraeli, and the stately solemnity which accompanied the lack of it in Gladstone.

Gladstone wrote:

"HAWARDEN CASTLE,
"*August* 12, 1874.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of June 24, and to return my best thanks for the compliment you have paid me, little deserved as it is, in naming after me the highest peak of the Finisterre Range in New Guinea.

"Allow me to subscribe myself, sir,

"Your most faithful servant,
"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"CAPTAIN MORESBY, R.N.,
"H.M.S. *BASILISK*."

Disraeli's reply was as follows:

"10, DOWNING STREET,
"*August* 17, 1874.

"DEAR SIR,

"Allow me to acknowledge the compliment you have paid me by planting my name on the north-east coast of New Guinea, and in selecting a godfather so distinguished for the peak which faces Mount Disraeli.

"I am, dear sir,

"Faithfully yours,
"BEN: DISRAELI."

Later, Disraeli remarked:

"I hope we shall agree better in New Guinea than we do in the House of Commons."

CHAPTER XXXIV

HOME

"To labour from morn until even and meet
With reproof for your toil.
It is well—that the gun may be humbled,
The compressor must check the recoil."
The Laws of the Navy.

We reached Astrolabe Gulf on May 18, the western limit of our work.

A belt of volcanic islands stand off this part of New Guinea. One of these, Leeson Island, passed by us on May 20, was then belching out volumes of smoke from the crater at its summit. It appeared cone-shaped from a distance, but on near approach we found the western side flattened, and the home of a large population. The island is about 2,200 feet high, by about 4 miles in circumference. Vegetation climbs for 800 or 1,000 feet up its sides, above which arid rocks, riven by deep fissures, form a strange crown to the slopes of feathery palms and tropical trees beneath. From the parched lips of the crater a silver stream came leaping; and surely never water looked brighter than this, now spreading itself out in tiny threads of silver, now gathering itself into white cascades, and plunging into fissure after fissure, till it reached the world of green below and leaped from the edge of a dark rock into the sea. Large numbers of the natives

came off to us, and showed the utmost anxiety for hoop-iron.

Their hair was dressed in the most preposterous fashion. It had been suffered to grow as long as a woman's, and was drawn through a conical cane case, over the ends of which it curled. This case, about a foot long and ornamented with feathers and shells, was worn at the back of the head and at right angles to it, having the appearance of a horn. I regretted much that time did not permit us to improve our acquaintance with these friendly people.

Nine miles north-west of Leeson Island we were entangled in a vast crowd of snags, huge uprooted trees borne on a great body of fresh water, which forced its way seaward. We had to get steam up to clear ourselves of these obstructions, which gave us some heavy blows in spite of care.

This water, doubtless the outcome of a very large river, I ardently longed to explore, but lack of time and the disablement of our steam pinnace forbade the attempt; thus I missed being the discoverer of the greatest river of North New Guinea, since named by the Germans Empress Augusta. To the east of the river we found bottom at 2,000 fathoms.

On May 23 we anchored in Humboldt Bay, 680 miles west of East Cape. I wished to learn if the Dutch had made a settlement here. We were presently surrounded by scores of canoes full of wild vociferating savages, armed with formidable bows and arrows, the first seen by us since leaving East Cape. They showed no signs of fear, and, knowing their reputation for making sudden attacks, we kept our rifles ready.

It seemed singular that the nearer we came to the seat of the Malay race proper in New Guinea, the

more unlike the coast natives became to the Malay type, the Humboldt Bay people being almost black, with hair inclined to be woolly, and faces verging towards the negro formation. The women were but little ornamented, and wore the ti-ti. The men were naked, and were profusely decorated with barbaric finery, some of which, particularly a breast-plate made of boars' tusks laid flat, sewn on plaited cane-work, and covered with brilliant red seeds, had quite a fine effect. Once or twice there was every prospect of a free fight amongst the men in the canoes, in some dispute over their trading, and all our skill as peacemakers was tasked. On another occasion a man parted with some sago for a smaller quantity of hoop-iron than his better half thought due, and without more ado she seized the paddle and belaboured him heartily over the head and shoulders, whilst his friends, instead of pitying his plight, shouted with merriment. He did not retaliate, but slunk away, looking foolish.

There was no trace of a Dutch settlement, and we stood west again after a narrow escape from a coral reef off Providence Island, on which a Dutch flag was flying.

On May 27 we had reached the western extreme of New Guinea, a voyage of 1,500 miles from East Cape, our discoveries proving it to be the largest island, non-continental, in the world.

Our old ship was in a very rusty condition from her long sea-work, and her decks were dyed a dark mahogany colour from the stacks of wood they had continuously borne; so it was needful to take a little time and put her to rights, that she might do herself credit beside the Dutch men-of-war she might meet at Amboyna.

Threshold Bay, forty-six miles south of the Equator, seemed a likely place for our purpose. On May 23 we anchored off a delicious little cove of this large open bay, before a large village, and here we saw the Dutch flag flying. The Rajah of Salwatti came off to visit us the following day in a grand paraku, ornamented with various banners and an enormous Dutch ensign. A huge gong slung in the bow was beaten continually as he approached, seated under a large silk umbrella, and we received him in conformity with such pomp.

We found him a well-informed, agreeable man, able to speak a few words of English, in which he told us that we were the first English man of war he had seen on this coast. We went to quarters and showed him the range of our great guns, which seemed to astonish him not a little, and he then exchanged gifts with me, presenting me with some live cassowaries, a tree kangaroo, and some beautiful bird-of-paradise skins, a civility that I returned with a regulation sword and a quantity of tea and sugar, which he said was the greatest luxury he could have. As he then took his leave with much ceremony, and landed at the village, we thought we had done with him. But no: the rajah doffed his robe of state, and, launching in a small canoe, with two men to paddle, came off to the ship as a trader of bird-skins. Very keen bargains he drove, coaxing fowling-pieces, powder, shot, and pistols from the officers for his skins—bargains over which we repented afterwards at our leisure.

Having completed our painting and smartening up, we bade our last adieu to New Guinea.

We arrived at Amboyna on June 2, and heartily enjoyed our return to the comforts of civilised life.

Here we met the zealous Russian traveller Macklay, who had spent eighteen months at Astrolabe Gulf, and concerning whose fate I had been instructed to make inquiries. He was able to clear up some of our perplexities, amongst others the native custom for disposing of their dead. He told us that the natives of Astrolabe Bay bury their dead in the houses they have lived in, and disinter the remains at the expiration of six months, when they hang the skull up and use the lower jaw for an ornament. But at the eastern end of New Guinea the skulls we saw hung up were fractured, and the jaw-bones worn as ornaments were by unmistakable signs described to be those of enemies whom they had eaten; and not only this, but cannibal feasts were frequently seen by the early missionaries at East Cape.

Leaving Amboyna on June 11, and fanned by a gentle monsoon, we sailed through the Molucca Sea—every sail set, not a cloud in the sky, not the sign of a squall on the horizon, as if over charmed waters. We postponed all drills, and gave the men perfect rest—pleasant indeed to them after their trying work. The thought of home filled, I think, every heart. These days were full of the feeling that most of us would wish the last days of life to bring with them: that of labour done—done to the full of our powers—of rest in the present, of hope of speedy reunion with friends long unseen.

Beautiful islands succeeded each other, rising like faint blue clouds on the horizon, gradually filling out and warming in size and colour, and sinking behind us again, to be forgotten soon, for our thoughts flew all before us now, and we scarcely looked behind.

We arrived at Singapore on June 29. Here I re-

ceived Commodore Goodenough's warm approval of our early work at East Cape. He, who was best able to judge of its merits, concluded his letter by saying: "You have fairly won the civil C.B." Our pennant was hauled down at Sheerness, and our four years' eventful commission came to an end on December 15, 1874.

On that day the *Times*, in a leading article, commenting on our discoveries, said:

"The *Basilisk* has explored and surveyed about 1,200 miles of coast-line in the archipelago of which New Guinea is the centre, and added many first-class harbours, navigable rivers, and more than 100 islands, large and small, to the chart. But this is not the best part of the work. The Admiralty are able to announce that the discoveries of the *Basilisk* have revealed the existence of a new and shorter route between Australia and China. It will, perhaps, be surprising to learn that it should remain for our own time to make these discoveries in and round an island, second only in size to Australia, and separated from our own insular possession by a channel only eighty miles across.

"The commercial world will await the particulars of the discoveries made by the *Basilisk* with even more interest than men of science. Statesmen will probably tolerate with considerable equanimity delays which postpone the necessity of dealing with difficult problems; but that work has been accomplished worthy to rank, in point alike of scientific and of practical value, with much more sensational performances will not be contested. The undertaking was not without its perils. Apart from the risks from disease and from the hostility of the natives, the safety of the vessel was perpetually endangered by coral reefs, and the conclusion of the enterprise without a single serious disaster deserves to be noticed as a proof of signally good seamanship."

This gratifying appreciation found an echo in the whole Press, the *Army and Navy Gazette* adding:

"We doubt if any man-of-war not a surveying ship had ever such results to show. We congratulate the

Basilisk on her splendid achievement. Honours and promotions have deservedly been won by the officers and men of the ship."

With such encouragement, like my old friend King Tom of the *Snake* days, I took my "undoubting way" to the Admiralty yamen, and, like his, my exuberant hopes were destined to be rudely dashed to the ground.

I received a kindly official reception from the First Lord and Sir Alexander Milne, with their congratulations on my safe return. They then referred me to the hydrographer, whose report they would consider.

My constant friend and supporter Admiral Sir George Richards had quite recently been succeeded as hydrographer by his late assistant, one of the old master class, an able surveyor and navigator, no doubt, but naturally, from his antecedents, a round plug in a square hole as regards breadth of view and courteous dealing with officers his superior in rank, but subordinate in matters connected with the great department of which he was the head. Moreover, he was prejudiced against what he thought to be "amateurish surveys" such as the *Basilisk's*. However, at the moment knowing nothing of this, with elation I opened before him our charts, and spoke of the *Basilisk's* discoveries.

"Discoveries, Captain Moresby!" he replied; "I was not aware that you had made any. I suppose New Guinea was discovered before you went there. We have work like yours coming in every day."

"Indeed!" I answered; "I was not aware of that. One hundred islands a day, and many hundred miles of unknown coasts charted! You must be pretty well occupied."

He looked a little puzzled, but it was of no use



H.M.S. "BASILISK" IN A GALE.

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arguing with such a man, although his opinions were necessarily the determining factor of the work we had accomplished.

Thus my hopes vanished; the word "discovery" was henceforth officially eliminated by the Admiralty. I was informed it was a "valuable and useful survey, highly creditable to myself and the officers concerned." I need not dwell on the disappointment, not only for myself, but also for those who had toiled so faithfully beside me, and now, as it proved, without further recompense or praise from quarters whence it would most have been valued. No protests could be useful, therefore I said no more. The men were granted a poor fortnight's extra leave, and a little later I was awarded the extra pay of a surveying officer for the latter part of our cruise. But for this we were nothing the better for all that had been accomplished, saving and excepting only in the reward which lies in the achievement of a duty which I had felt to be imposed on me.

The Prime Minister and Secretary of the Colonies took a deep interest in our discoveries, and allowed me to explain our charts personally, and also to express my views urging the immediate annexation of all New Guinea east of the Dutch possessions. In these opinions I was strongly backed by Lord Normanby and the Queensland Government; but we preached to deaf ears: it was not the fortunate moment.

I also wrote on the subject to Commodore Goodenough, and I quote his reply, since it eloquently expresses the official view of those days. He wrote:

"The work you took up as a nautical question, with something of the joy and adventurous spirit of former days, the Government of Queensland and New South

Wales seem to have taken up, hoping to make it a handle of extension of Colonial Empire. Have we not enough tropical possessions without requiring more? enough issues to sap the strength of our Englishmen without giving Government patronage to the infliction of new wounds on our body? enough circumstances in which there must be a subject race alongside our English proprietors, without putting the Government stamp on a new scheme, which will help to demoralise us, and weaken our moral sense as a nation?"

Such were the views entertained by the home authorities of those days. Queensland protested, but in vain. No less than ten years elapsed, and then, when Germany had already seized the fairest portion of New Guinea, and transformed New Britain and its islands into the Bismarck Archipelago, our Government at last woke up to Queensland's insistency, and South-East New Guinea became a British colony, with Port Moresby for its capital.

For ten days I was a miniature lion in London, lecturing at the Royal Geographical Society, receiving deputations of company promoters, and trying to satisfy the curiosity of society about New Guinea; and then I went home, with the promise from Sir Alexander Milne of the command of one of the Detached Squadron, as the cruising frigates of those days were termed. I could desire nothing better, since it was decreed that the *Basilisk's* discoveries were to be unrecognised and unrewarded.

CHAPTER XXXV

H.M.S. "ENDYMION" AND BERMUDA DOCKYARD

"Sleep after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please."

SPENSER.

"The ship sailed fast in the morning sun,
By point and cave as the fair wind blew,
And into a little port she knew,
And her voyage was done."

BUT here, too, I was doomed to disappointment.

Fully satisfied with the prospect of employment in the best line of the service, a few months' rest was worth having, when all was changed by a letter from Sir Alexander Milne, telling me that the Detached Squadron, instead of coming home to be recommissioned by new captains, had, for political reasons, been sent on to China, and their return to England was uncertain; therefore his promise could not now be fulfilled. Instead I was offered the command of the coastguard district, extending from Cromer to St. Abb's Head, with my head-quarters at Hull, in the *Endymion*, a screw frigate of 38 guns, but with only a nucleus crew, the full complement being made up once a year when the coastguard men were assembled for a cruise in the parent ship.

It was a crushing disappointment, but I was assured at the Admiralty that it would not stand in my way for better things in the future.

However, coastguard work was novel and interesting, for in addition to inspection tours to every coastguard station on that lengthy coast, there was also the supervision of some 250 men of the Royal Naval Reserve. I enjoyed a pleasant eighteen months of this work, and then was appointed captain in charge of the dockyard and naval establishments at Bermuda—a gratifying offer, for that dockyard then ranked high in importance as the head-quarters of the North American and West Indian Fleet. On April 1, 1878, I took over the command from my old messmate, Leveson Somerset.

The islands of Bermuda scarcely need description here, so well known are their coral reefs, exquisite verdure, and almost perpetual spring, the temperate and torrid zones meeting and giving the products of each with extraordinary profusion.

Ireland Island, on which the naval establishments are situated, lies nearly north and south, and is about a mile and three-quarters long, with a width nowhere exceeding half a mile, whilst for the greater part it averages about 250 yards.

The dockyard, at its northern extremity, is protected by a breakwater 700 yards in length, running at an acute angle into Grassy Bay, enclosing a water space of 16½ acres, with berths for six first-class ships, besides smaller vessels. In addition, there is a floating dock capable of holding the largest battle-ship. Surrounding the quays are the machine shops, storehouses, and officers' quarters.

On an eminence above the dockyard is accommodation for a detachment of Royal Marines, and powerful batteries for sea defence.

At the extreme south end of the island stands the Naval Hospital.

Perhaps the most beautiful, certainly not the saddest, part of Ireland Island is the cemetery, where, in hope of eternal life, sleep many of our sailors, from admirals commanding-in-chief to cabin boys, who one and all laid down their lives for their country—if not in war, yet still in her service.

H.M.S. *Terror*, an antiquated ironclad, flew my pennant. A sea-going ironclad was held in reserve. In all, the roll-call of those under my command was about 1,500 souls.

My official residence, The Cottage, was a roomy bungalow, standing in picturesque grounds, on the shores of Grassy Bay, not half a mile from the dockyard. The workmen lived in pleasant terraces near The Cottage.

Such is a brief sketch of the island over which the captain-in-charge reigned supreme, excepting only that he was accountable to the admiral commanding on the station for the efficiency of the dockyard in relation to the purposes of the fleet.

It need scarcely be said that a sailor whose whole service life had been spent at sea would feel many misgivings when transferred to such a different position. It would be easy to be just a "signing officer," and perhaps better for one's own interests, for the official mind loves ease, and, when there are no rows or friction, is apt to decide that So-and-so is the right man for the place. However, it is not everyone who can compound in this way with his conscience, and it was in ignorance which was in no way blissful, but with a determination to try to understand my business, that I took my seat at the first levee, as the daily morning meeting of officers is called; and as I did not hide my ignorance, I found a cordial desire to acquaint

: with the working of the various departments. ıus before long I felt that the command of a ship d that of a dockyard were not so widely divergent I had anticipated.

Not many days after my first levee there was a ght of heavy tropical rain, and when I came to the rd I found it literally a lake. The water lay erywhere, from 2 feet to 1 inch deep, and I learned ıt this had been the normal condition of the yard er heavy rain for years. However, as at high water : sea was not more than 8 feet below the dock- rd level, it was evident that a few vertical pits :avated through the underlying rock and coral would ectually carry off the rainfall. In making these we ne across the original drains, which were after the ne simple pattern, and from henceforth all flooding m rainfall ceased.

During the hurricane months, from July to Novem- r, Bermuda is left severely alone by the fleet, and in ir absence the great floating dock is removed from r rigid fastenings and placed in the centre of the nber, where she is secured by chain cables attached enormous anchors embedded in various parts of the d, to be careened and have her bottom cleaned and nted. The work begins in June, and every effort made to finish it before September 1, since before t date hurricanes are rare. On August 27 we had npleted the work. The dock was upright, floating the camber, and next day would have seen her urely fastened by the iron bridges in her berth. the afternoon of the 27th there was no sign of any proaching storm, but at ten in the evening a falling ss and squalls increasing in weight sent me down the dockyard, and it then became evident that we

were in for a hurricane. The dock was straining at her cables, and was the centre of all our anxiety. The wind blew from Grassy Bay, striking full on her broadside; therefore our men were gathered on the breakwater with steel-wire hawsers, and as the hurricane increased in force, and the blinding spray swept over us, it was a matter of incredible difficulty in the inky darkness to attach the hawsers to the dock and tauten them to the anchors on the breakwater. The shrieking wind obliged all orders to be given by signs. Often our men were blown off the breakwater into the camber, but were rescued, and at last, in the early morning, in a terrific squall, which blew her nearly on her side, she broke adrift; cables and hawsers snapped, and others dragged, the anchors ripping up the solid rock that held them. We stood aghast, powerless, not knowing what next would happen, when suddenly the wind flew round and brought the strain on the chains that had before been slack. It gave us a breathing space, and then, with fresh hope as the day dawned, we got on the dockyard side, and renewed from there our efforts to hold her as she surged up and down, mixing cables and hawsers in inextricable confusion, yet keeping afloat, for the wind now blew through the camber, striking her end-on. The speed of the hurricane was about eighty miles per hour, and we were bombarded with falling wreckage from the buildings, but we managed to strengthen her fore and aft cables. At ten o'clock in the forenoon the worst was over, the dock was safe, and we were almost exhausted in mind and body. The Admiralty expressed their "high approval of the resource, zeal, and energy displayed on the occasion"; but man can do little to counteract these terrible forces of Nature.

Had not the wind changed when it did, their lordships' verdict would have been otherwise, I think; however, we did not quarrel with our luck.

The employment of labour in a dockyard to obtain the best results has always been a question of considerable difficulty, for each department has a certain number of labourers appointed, amounting at Bermuda in the aggregate to some hundreds of men, and each resented any interference with the control of its respective workmen. At times all were busily employed, but there were recurrent slack intervals. There was also the *Terror's* small crew, and a certain number of supernumeraries: for these (excepting rifle and cutlass drill, for the *Terror* had no guns mounted) there was absolutely no occupation.

On the other hand, as I surveyed the dockyard with its surroundings, I saw there was every need for exertion. The surface of the breakwater was rough and dangerous to man and beast. There were no facilities for the refuse from the ships lying alongside it to be thrown into the sea, whilst it was evident that stone piers projecting into Grassy Bay opposite each ship's berth would supply the want and be generally useful.

Then Ireland Island was destitute of any recreation or parade ground, the only available cricket ground being a rough one on Somerset Island, three miles distant, whilst it was clearly to be seen that if only the 7 or 8 acres from which the materials had been taken for the construction of the dockyard were cleared and levelled, there would be generous space for both. These were big jobs, and if applied for under the annual estimates, had no more chance of being granted by the Admiralty than the sky had of falling.

There was only one way to accomplish them—viz., by manipulating the labour and by personal supervision, without reference to the home authorities—a proceeding somewhat dangerous, but worth the risk.

A new master-attendant, who had previously served with me, and a clerk of the works had joined, and I had now in all the heads of departments officers who would willingly co-operate with me to forward what was seen to be a public advantage.

I therefore determined to make a beginning, and from henceforth up to the last day of my command (two and a half years later) we laboured steadily.

A scratch working party was formed under the charge of a boatswain, Mr. Twohy, an indefatigable worker, and almost as good an engineer as he was a sailor.

The breakwater received his first attention. Its surface was smoothed, levelled, and rough garden-seats provided, and many were the self-congratulations showered on Mr. Twohy and his party by the officers and ships' companies of the fleet. "I'm blessed if this ain't as good a road as Portsmouth Hard; none of yer blooming stones and hollows now," the bluejackets would say.

The piers were a far bigger job, for they had to resist heavy seas, and we made them 8 feet wide and about 18 feet long. The material was at hand in the shape of large blocks of limestone, left by the builders of the dockyard.

Bluejackets were discovered who had been brought up as stone-masons. Mr. Twohy himself wielded plumb-line and square, and so the piers gradually arose from a depth of 8 feet to the level of the breakwater, and, excepting one washed away in a hurricane, stand to this day, a means of purifying the ships, and

a delight to the men as they sat and smoked and fished from them.

The building of these piers occupied more than a year, but the conversion of the old quarry field had not been forgotten.

This was the biggest undertaking. It was an agglomeration of great mounds of rubbish, deep hollows, boulders, and loose shingle—a place to be avoided alike in daylight or darkness.

The first thing was to level it roughly, and after that to get away the great boulders. For months the rubbish-heaps resisted our efforts, but were eventually levelled. Then the question arose, "Could the boulders be put to any use?"

There was a narrow ridge dividing the old quarry from Grassy Bay, on the top of which ran the road to the dockyard; under this was a little cove, useless for landing purposes on account of its rocky shores, but if converted into a boat-harbour, invaluable to the workmen's families. It was therefore determined to use the boulders for this purpose. The difficulty lay in hoisting them from the quarry to the top of the ridge; but we had a reserve of power in the men as they streamed out of the dockyard after their day's work, for they willingly, with cheer and laughter, clapped on to the tackles which lay along the road. The boulders came flying up, and then were tumbled down to the cove, where Mr. Twohy and his men built a pier and a breakwater, forming a snug boat-harbour, which had long been needed.

Eventually about 6 acres of the old quarry ground were converted into a space as level and firm as a billiard-table; it was then partly covered with soil and sodded. In no instance during the construction

of these improvements had the necessary work of the dockyard suffered by the absence of a single workman, and their utility was demonstrated by all being taken over and maintained by the Admiralty.

Before I left Bermuda I had the satisfaction of seeing the first cricket match played on Moresby Plain, as it was officially designated by the Admiralty. Five hundred seamen and marines with field-guns were also exercised there. Better than all, it has been to the children of Ireland Island the happiest of playgrounds, and every officer and man in the dockyard shared largely in the pleasures which their willing co-operation had achieved.

By a cruel and unnecessary arrangement, the houses of all the principal officers of the yard were in the hot, arid dockyard, without gardens or a blade of grass to relieve the glare, and, moreover, in close proximity to the coal-heaps. In the cold season, and when the presence of the fleet gave animation and amusement, this state of things could be endured; but during the hot months, when the officers and their families had to depend on their own society for recreation, it became unendurable, and small wonder that petty squabbles arose.

On the other side of Grassy Bay, two miles to the east, was Clarence Hill, the house of the admiral. None but a poet's pen could do justice to this—the loveliest corner in beautiful Bermuda. The landing-place—Clarence Cove—is scarcely large enough to hold a pinnace, but it is enclosed by rocky shores, and the water, lapping on a coral beach, is blue as a sparrow's egg, and populous with fish of brilliant colour. A few hewn steps lead to the top of the rocks, where all the wealth of subtropical vege-

tation—cedars, azaleas, palms, oleanders—springing from an undergrowth of ferns and flowers, border a steep path, winding on and up till at 100 feet above the cove the picturesque house stands, its site commanding the sea all round. Beautiful gardens, tennis-lawns, and shady walks surround it, a steep ridge on one side of the grounds dividing them from the plenteous vegetable and fruit gardens. This ridge, which at one time must have been a veritable *mauvais pas* to the gardeners, had been made their servant by the skill of a former admiral, whose name still rings like a trumpet-call to English seamen, and hardly less so to men of science—Lord Cochrane, Earl of Dundonald, who from 1848 to 1851 was Commander-in-Chief of the station.

He pierced the ridge of limestone with a capacious tunnel, 8 feet high, as broad, and about 50 yards in length. A few black fellows with picks and wheelbarrows were, I believe, his only tools, and it was, in the circumstances, a gigantic work, but dwarfed by two subterranean caves which he excavated on the north side of Clarence Cove. These, I think, he must have intended for a battery, for they were separate and fitted with ports; but happily they had never been used for any other purpose than bathing-boxes.

Here ladies could get ready for a swim, and then, standing at the gun openings, plunge into the sea beneath, the depths so clear and blue that it was difficult to tell where air and water met.

I often stood and wondered if the old warrior had asked the Admiralty of his day for permission to do these things; I think not. Such was Clarence Hill, used by the Commander-in-Chief and his family from December to April, and then left untenanted for the

rest of the year under my charge. That such a paradise should remain unused when unfortunate officials were roasting in the grim dockyard seemed an anomaly to be speedily got rid of. Happily the admiral gave me carte-blanche, and henceforward during my time every Saturday afternoon saw us, a joyous gathering, shaking the dust of the dockyard from our feet, and revelling in the enchanting grounds of Clarence Hill. The younger ones played tennis, and possibly made love, whilst we elder ones lay on the grass and smoked and read. Then, as darkness fell, the servants from The Cottage had provided an abundant picnic meal in the house, where the evenings passed with all joyousness.

On Sunday, after the cathedral service at Hamilton, we gave ourselves up to delicious idleness, looking through the cedar-trees with half-closed eyes at the distant dockyard quivering in the heated atmosphere. Then Monday morning would come, and after an early breakfast we steamed back to the dockyard, gladly buckling to our work, invigorated, fresh, and satisfied. Neither were the bluejackets forgotten. There was an unoccupied 2 acres of ground near the Naval Hospital, beautiful with cedars and flowers. It had been long marked off as a site for a Sailors' Home, and Admiral Sir Cooper Key, when in command the year before, had started a subscription list, which was continued; but it was evident that if this were the only hope progress would be slow. It was resolved to establish a naval canteen. It was only a big shed, but under the management of two steady petty officers it soon averaged a profit of £50 a month, and enabled us to begin the home, and lay out the grounds without loss of time.

Just then H.M.S. *Bacchante* arrived, having on board as naval cadets the two young Princes of Wales, Edward and George. It was determined to invite them to make their first appearance as principals in a public function by laying the foundation-stone of the Sailors' Home. A silver trowel and mallet, made in the dockyard for the occasion, were prepared.

The young Princes were a bit shy, but played their parts admirably. Prince Edward declared the stone well and truly laid, whilst Prince George struck it with the mallet.

The *Bacchante* remained twelve days, during which time the boy Princes saw more of the big wigs and dowagers than perhaps they cared for; but The Cottage was a relaxation, for on a little islet lying before it I had built, with the aid of my boat's crew and my own hands, an American bowling-alley, connecting it to my garden with a light bridge. It was the only one on Ireland Island, and here the Princes and their shipmates delighted to come day after day. My coxswain, who rolled back the balls, got some good tips, and I advised him to keep one of the shillings as a memento of a gift from the future King of England; but as he took a quid out of his mouth, he said judicially: "You see, sir, if I keeps it I might lose it, but if I gets a glass of grog I shall never disremember." In the spreading branches of a mighty cedar-tree in my garden I had fitted a table and seats for half a dozen, and here the young Princes were able to drink sherry cobbler in new circumstances up aloft.

From this fortunate beginning the Sailors' Home soon grew into a handsome building, with accommodation for 200 men, and billiards and tennis-courts, etc.,

for their amusement. It was fully appreciated by the fleet, and in after-years was still further enlarged.

My life at The Cottage was full of interest, and I was seldom without visitors, for my bachelor life offered a novelty in its unceremonious ways. The tea-parties in my cedar-tree, ascended by spiral stairs, were extremely popular, and possibly not least so with ladies who (like Miss Arabella Allen, of the fur-topped boots) were conscious of pretty ankles.

My little island had its attractions also, free of mosquitoes as it was, and swept like the deck of a ship by every breeze that stirred.

The Governor and Lady Laffan, with their clever daughter, were my frequent guests, and are always a pleasant remembrance. I recall their enjoyment of my Irish butler's acted and spoken bulls—some of them incredibly absurd. The following is not a chestnut, although it looks like it: He broke a pane of glass in a large window, and I said to him: "Take the broken pieces out, and make it look all alike." Shortly after I found, to my horror, an empty frame, with not one pane left, and when called to account he replied, with the utmost assurance: "Sure, didn't yer honour want it all alike, and aren't they alike now?" He always escaped with a wigging, for I could never tell—nor, I suppose, could any Saxon—whether I myself should have been more explicit, or whether a misplaced sense of Irish humour led to all our many contretemps.

The arrival of the fleet in November changed my guests from residents and soldiers to my brother-officers. As the ships were docked the captains, glad of a change from their sea-life, assembled at the Cottage, and made pleasant times there. They would bring game and mutton occasionally from Halifax, to

vary our Bermudian fare, and I have a recollection of Jack Fisher waiting until the flag-ship was actually under way and going out of the harbour, when he deposited a live sheep in my garden as a farewell offering.

These were good days, and Fisher's humour was inexhaustible. But there was one—the captain of the *Druid*—whose independence of all official restrictions and love of jokes were enough to drive the superintendent of a dockyard crazy, while his never-failing geniality and generosity carried off triumphantly all that anyone else would have been hanged for.

No one could be angry with Kennedy, even when he cribbed a whale-boat for his ship; or, without the smallest authority, annexed a new carpet for his cabin; or as when two men who had had a tiff met at his table and discovered pistols neatly folded in their dinner napkins. His fun decorated every situation with flying colours. Happily he is yet to the fore—an admiral and K.C.B.

On April 1, 1881, I handed over my command to another, when parting kindnesses, warm farewells, and much speechifying, poured in on me from all quarters, together with gratifying official recognition; but I think the Commander-in-Chief Sir Leopold McClintock's last words were my greatest pleasure, when he simply said: "I hope I shall be regretted as you are when I also give up my command."

This, after all, is as much as anyone can wish to gain —to carry one's soul with clean hands through this difficult world, and to have earned the kind thoughts and approval of our fellows.

At Washington, on my homeward way, I took part in the inauguration of Farragut's statue, by the invita-

tion of the President of the United States, James Garfield. It was made a great national function, all the European ambassadors and ministers being present, together with many naval and military officers. The President opened the proceedings with a patriotic speech conceived in perfect taste. Not so the senators, whose spread-eagleism would have been serious if it had not been so very absurd. Senator Vorees took Paul Jones for his special theme, and when he described in inflated periods the Scottish adventurer's plunder of his late master's plate, and his triumph over the Serapis, I could see the finer perceptions of the President wince as he looked at the English ministers and officers present.

Farragut's statue was a fine achievement, representing the great sailor about to scan the horizon, telescope in hand. The sculptor was Vinnie Reams, the wife of Major Hoxton, of the U.S. Engineers—a young woman as beautiful as she was gifted. Mr. Garfield introduced me, and I had the honour of spending the evening with her in her studio. Her bright intelligence, vivacity, and free American ways captivated me from the first moment, when she said: "Sit down, captain, and tell me all about England. I guess I know Italy (she had studied in Rome), but not England." It was a wide subject, but she hit off the points which interested her, and laughed with child-like merriment at our insular ways. Every now and then came a knock, and a servant brought telegrams from all parts of the world, congratulating her on the success of the day. She would toss them on one side and beg me to go on with my story. At last I was permitted to see her treasures, amongst them a priceless cameo from the Pope. I did not wonder at this

gift, if His Holiness had any particle of human nature in his infallible bosom. That visit has ever remained delightful and alone in my memory.

From General Sherman also I received warm hospitality. The ruling passion of his life was exploration. Circumstances had made him the first of living American generals, but in his early days he had been the keenest explorer of the then unknown Rockies and western lands. We had therefore common interests, and he paid me the compliment of sitting up nearly all night until he had finished reading my "Discoveries in New Guinea."

In my old acquaintance Commander Evans, "Fighting Bob Evans," now admiral commanding the U.S. fleet destined for the Pacific coast, I found a typical sailor chum. Not only did he spend time on showing me all things naval, but he also made me acquainted with every part of the beautiful city, this including a personal acquaintance with all the sherry cobblers and cocktails for which each drinking-bar in Washington was famous; but by the time I had visited half a dozen, and given my verdict on bosom caressers, gum ticklers, Sabbath calms, and so on, I was compelled to call a halt, much to the disappointment of Bob Evans and his brother-officers. Arriving in England, I received a gratifying reception at the Admiralty, together with official approval of my services at Bermuda. Some weeks later I became rear-admiral, and was appointed an assessor to the Board of Trade, and also to the Court of Appeal; but I had served for the last time afloat. I had always hoped to be able to say, "With the hauling down of my flag my official career closed," but it was not to be. The appointments of rear-admirals twenty-six years

ago were few (ten commands, with thirty-four applicants); all could not be employed. I had not commanded in a fleet, and those on the list were considered more fit than myself; and not only so, but there were many officers who, with abilities of the highest class, had never even reached the rank of admiral. Luck was against them, or, what was far more often the case, their modesty prevented self-advertisement, and they were thus passed in the professional race by men of not half their real ability, but double their self-assertion.

Therefore, although disappointed, I knew that I had succeeded beyond my deserts. I could look back on duty attempted to the limit of my power, and no man could rub out the marks where my keel had sailed or my command had been exercised.

In laying down my pen and considering the past and present, I see momentous changes.

The Navy of my day has passed for ever—not only in matters mechanical, but also in the type of men produced. From the new Navy the country expects a far higher standard of intellect and excellence.

The endeavour is to eliminate nepotism, to discourage the vulgarity of self-assertion, and to place each man's destiny in his own hands. The service has responded nobly. Never was the sense of duty stronger, nor a fine emulation keener in its efforts. The old Navy had no training to compare with the almost terrible responsibility now held by mere boys, in command of destroyers and torpedo-boats, exercising in fleet manœuvres at high rates of speed, in pitchy darkness, and with no lights allowed. This brings its reward in steady nerve and a love of the work entrusted to them that turns the anxieties almost into a recreation.

A young sailor, already among the foremost in the scientific branches of his rank and torpedo-lieutenant of a big cruiser, when telling me with delight of the addition of deck watch to his torpedo duties, added: "I never kept officers' watch before, and it is just the very thing I wanted."

To accept the increased responsibilities gladly but seriously, and to combine the old chivalrous gallantry and daring with the specialisation and patient attention to detail of modern science—these are the problems set in the present day to the younger officers of the fleet. And they have not failed. The coming generation of captains and admirals will be worthy of its best traditions.

Nor can I conclude without a few words in relation to the bluejacket.

I knew him as he was sixty-six years since—generous in his impulses, lovable in his virtues, and even in his failings, but shiftless too; often drunken, mostly ignorant, yet good stuff—none better—needing the strong hand of despotic leadership and a discipline almost cruel in its severity. I have lived to see that severity relaxed, and with each relaxation the men developing in self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, under the influence of education and better treatment, and a sense of their duty to the country, with the love and confidence which the country gives them so ungrudgingly in return. This points a clear course for the future, and it is difficult to say what may not be hoped from a Navy so constituted.

So the old spirit—that which was alone worth preserving, and is indeed undying—burns with a steady flame in the new lamps, and it is undying because it is fed, as of old, by devotion to duty and the fear of God.

APPENDIX

In the foregoing account of the *Basilisk's* explorations on the east coast of New Guinea, I have virtually retained the text and the feelings inspired by our additions to the hydrographical knowledge and charts then available.

I make no apology for so doing, for they showed

> "We were the first that ever burst
> Into those silent seas."

The *Basilisk* was paid off in 1874. Her charts were then published and received as new discoveries.

Four years later, in 1878, in the national archives at Madrid, was discovered the tracing of a survey, made in 1606, by the great navigator Torres, of his visit to South-East New Guinea. For 272 years this chart of a portion of his famous voyages had been unknown to navigators, but it was then brought to light and published by the Spanish Royal Geographical Society, in their *Boletin* for 1878.

It proved incontestably Torres' claim to have preceded the *Basilisk* in these waters.

Briefly, it may be stated that Torres, approaching the Louisiade Archipelago from the south, sighted the high land of Moresby and Basilisk Islands, but, like myself on first approach, did not recognise them as islands.

Nearing these, he charted Margaret Island and the entrance to Fortescue Straits, eventually coming to an

anchor off the narrow gut which separates Basilisk from Hayter Island—named by me Rocky Pass, but by Torres Boca de la Batalla, doubtless from some serious encounter with the natives when proceeding in boats to explore his San Millan Bay, or Jenkins' Bay of the *Basilisk*.

Passing through the Boca de la Batalla, he reached Cabo Fresco, Challis Head of the Basilisk, which the Spanish authorities fix as his most northern position. From this point his rough sketch of San Millan Bay and its surroundings was made.

Unfortunately, the only letter extant from Torres referring to East New Guinea (dated Manila, July 12, 1607) has no reference to San Millan Bay, or to the time he spent there; so also the two letters from Torres' officer, Diego de Prado, six years later, dated from Goa, December 24, 1613, one addressed to the King of Spain and the other to H.M. secretary, are equally silent as to Torres' chart and the time occupied.

Thus the tracing of San Millan Bay, together with the following note or legend, which at page 74 of the Spanish Royal Geographical *Boletin* for 1878 is stated to have been attached to Torres' original chart, are the only evidences as to the extent of his discoveries in East New Guinea.

The note or legend is thus translated:

NOTE OR LEGEND ON LARGE BAY TO THE NORTH.*

"This bay has a circumference of more than forty leagues, and on coming with the small vessel [boat] beyond Cabo Fresco, which is where one can make one's exit with a vessel, towards the east we saw no barrier except a few islets, in which direction, as we judged, there are wide openings. Towards the west we saw no opening, but all high serrated and continuous land to the west. We gave up coasting, by reason of not having a ship with oars for the purpose."

* Literal translation, supplied by Royal Geographical Society.

These remarks point to Torres' belief that had he sailed east or north-east from Cabo Fresco, there was an open passage to the north shores of New Guinea; but if he had sailed west, there was "no opening, but all high serrated and continuous land" to oppose him, and this is an exact description of the great south-east bluff of New Guinea, which, with its precipitous height of 2,000 feet, overshadowed Torres at barely six miles' distance.

To understand this a careful consideration of Torres' chart of San Millan (Jenkins') Bay is necessary.

I therefore append a facsimile copy, taken from the Spanish Royal Geographical Society *Boletin* for 1878, constructed on a scale of Castilian leagues, or 2·634 English miles.

I also, for comparison, give a copy of the *Basilisk's* running survey of the same locality, constructed on a scale of one inch to the mile. It will be seen that in their general configurations the two tracings agree, but here the coincidence ceases. The question which hydrographers have to decide is whether the unnamed land which Torres depicts on his chart as running continuously from opposite Hayter Island for about twenty miles nearly east and west is the great south-east end of New Guinea, or is it the much less lofty land on the northern shores of Milne Bay?

If the latter, then Torres from Cabo Fresco (his admitted farthest position)* has introduced an unaccountable precedent for naval surveyors by placing on his chart land vaguely seen from twenty to thirty miles distant, and ignoring altogether the south-east extreme of New Guinea, which, as I have said, with its 2,000 feet of precipitous height (more than twice the

* "The Spaniards saw it [the bay to the north] only from the neighbourhood of what they called Cabo Fresco, which corresponds to the Challis Head of the modern exploration" (*vide* Spanish Royal Geographical *Boletin*, 1878, p. 74).

height of the distant land), fronted him at a distance of only six miles.

To suppose this is wellnigh impossible.

Where Torres' ships sailed or his boats pulled his courses are correct, but not his distances; these (which he assumed) and his compass bearings are so much in error that it is difficult to define the land depicted.

For example, the correct course and distance from his Cabo Fresco to the west end of Hayter Island is south-west by west, six and a half miles; but by Torres it is north-west, twelve miles, an error of seven points in the course and of five and a half miles in the distance. Again, the correct trend of Hayter Island is west-north-west and east-south-east, four and three-quarter miles.

Torres has it running north by west and south by east for twenty miles, with its western extremity still undefined, stretching across China Straits to join the mainland, as he supposed.* These grave errors, which point with no uncertain finger to thick atmospherical conditions, necessitated on Torres' chart corresponding ones in the trend of the mainland opposite Hayter Island, in order that it might front, as it does, San Millan Bay. This land is continued without a break, which must have been shown if Torres meant any part of it to represent the north-lands of Milne Bay.

In the same topsy-turvy fashion, the south-east bluff of New Guinea bears north instead of west from Cabo Fresco; and this error, together with the insignificance of San Millan Bay in comparison with the circumference which the legend claims for it, have caused an English and a French hydrographer to credit Torres with the discovery of Milne Bay. But by the names the great seaman has placed on his chart the causes

* "Giving the name of 'Magna Margarita' to the Hayter Island, although our navigators believed it larger, or a part of New Guinea" (*vide* Spanish Royal Geographical *Boletin*, 1878, p. 85).

which produced these contradictions can be distinctly traced.

Cabo Fresco, his farthest northern position, is most significant of a cold, pitiless rain—common enough there, and often lasting for twenty-four hours—which struck like hail on the lightly clad boats' crews, and obscured any distant land; hence there is no trace on Torres' chart of the higher north-land of Milne Bay or East Cape.

Again, the names Boca de la Batalla and Fort Santiago plainly denote his difficulties in his small boats, with primitive firearms, when attacked by the war canoes of the natives, slinging (as I have seen) showers of stones and hurling spears at a comparatively safe distance from his arquebuses.

Thus, in probable storm, mist and battle, he speedily left Cabo Fresco, regained his ships, and sailed at once from those inhospitable shores. Shaping his course to the westward, he traced the south-east coast of New Guinea until he had completed his great discovery of Torres Straits, and separated for ever New Guinea from Australia.

One half-hour's clear weather off Hayter Island would have shown him its insignificant size of four and three-quarter miles in length—not twenty—and that two miles of China Straits separated it from the mainland; but this was denied him, and the same atmospherical conditions must also have obscured the land about East Cape, twenty miles distant.

A pound of practical experience is worth a ton of theory.

Torres and the *Basilisk* were on all-fours in navigating with charts which showed the great island ending in a broad wedge shape. We both lay off Cabo Fresco. Torres was in small boats and surrounded by difficulties, with only his unaided eyesight to depend upon, for telescopes were not known to seamen in 1606. We,

in a lofty ship, provided with powerful telescopes, and in clear weather for days, anxiously scanned the land to the north of Cabo Fresco—"the unknown land," as we then termed it! We concluded that it was an uncharted island of the D'Entrecasteaux group. With all our advantages, we had no foresight of it forming the shores of a great bay.

The cause of our mistake was not cleared up until the *Basilisk* had arrived (as my readers will recollect) within twelve miles of the head of Milne Bay, which is formed by a wide alluvial delta, running many miles inland. Thus, from Cabo Fresco the north-lands of Milne Bay *must* appear as an island, making it *impossible* for any seaman, without previous knowledge, to decide at Cabo Fresco, thirty-four statute miles from the head of Milne Bay, that there was a great bay to the westward. If perchance he had guessed it, he never could have added, "To the west we saw no openings, but all high serrated continuous land," the head of Milne Bay being low and flat.

The generous and chivalrous Spaniards claim no more than their famous sailor has delineated on his chart. They give the *Basilisk* full credit for the discovery of Milne Bay, and unstinted praise, such as she has received from no other nationalities.

Their historian writes:

"Moresby fixed, for instance, that New Guinea ends to the south-east in the shape of a fork, instead of a narrow and pointed cape."

And again:

"To Moresby cannot be denied the glory of having established the real outline of very extended coasts to the other (north) side of New Guinea."

But, let me add, to Torres belongs the honour of the first discovery of the archipelago and the great bluff which terminates New Guinea to the south-east.

It was a glorious sailor indeed who, with scanty

means, accomplished so much. I should esteem it an honour to be able to change the name of Moresby to Torres Island, if such a thing were possible.

But that Torres, with his unaided eye, was able to form any conception of Milne Bay from Cabo Fresco is a supposition which could only occur to the minds of hydrographers who, with a previous knowledge of its existence, attribute to him a foresight so easy to themselves.

Lastly, I think my brother-sailors will agree that the existence of Torres' chart, unknown as it was to the *Basilisk*, does not detract in any way from whatever merit is due to her discoveries, or re-discoveries. They were the last extensive maritime ones possible between the Polar circles—the last in which the experience of Torres, Cook, and the old navigators, could be repeated. They have, in the words of the Spanish commentator, "obtained a real and satisfactory success in the scientific world"; but as they resulted from the *Basilisk's* own initiative, and were not inspired by any learned society, by the Admiralty, or commanders-in-chief, they have otherwise been neglected and forgotten. The eminent naval historian Sir Clements Markham, in his account of "Voyages and Discoveries by Englishmen from 1455 to 1898" (published in Clowes's "History of the Royal Navy"), does not even allude to the *Basilisk's* discoveries; but he has since generously allowed it to be "a serious oversight."

Yet but for the *Basilisk's* work there might have now been a mailed fist holding Port Moresby — as, indeed, was very nearly the case — and paralysing Australian expansion. While I write these words Australian papers are expressing alarm at the establishment of a German naval base at Simpson Haven, North-East New Guinea.

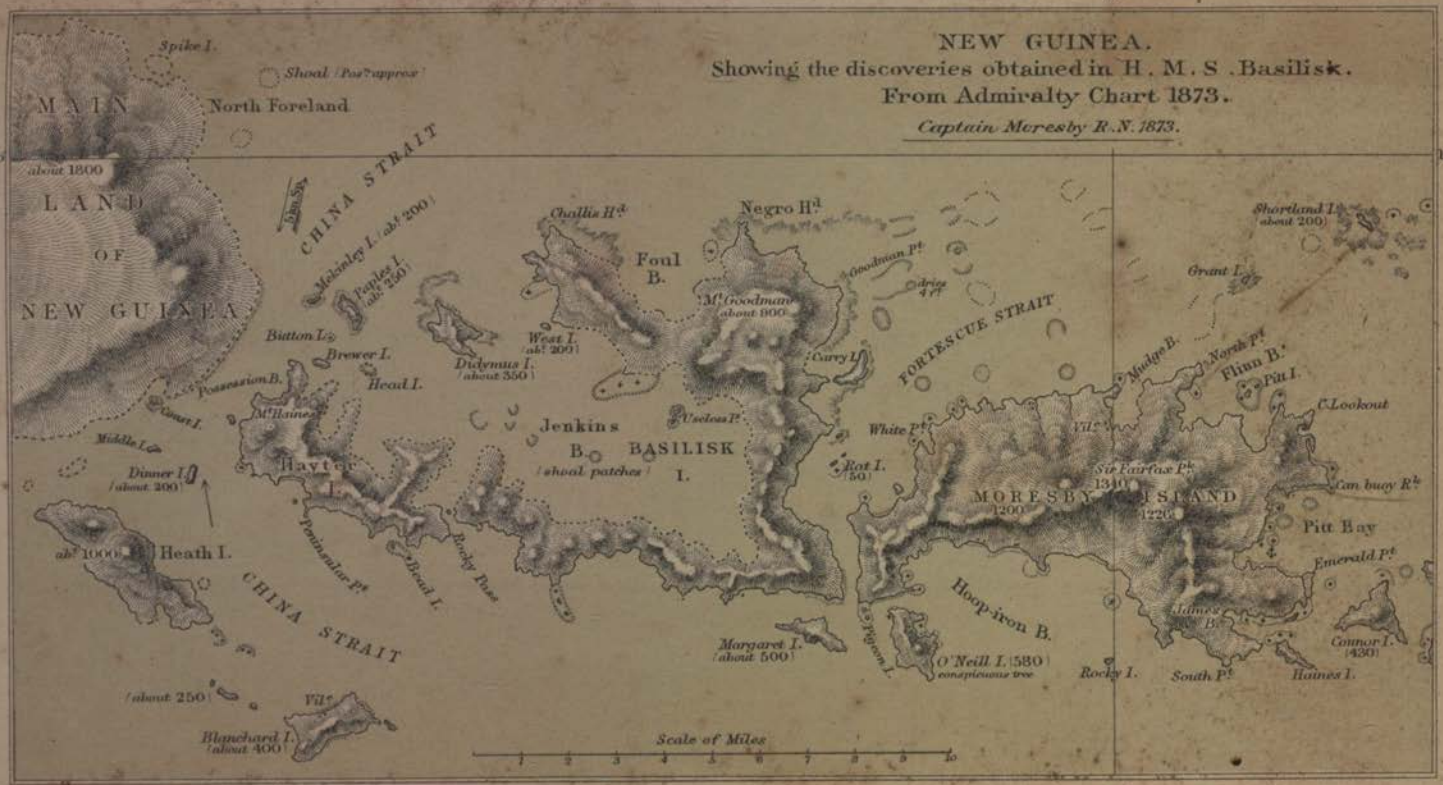
The day is coming when these facts will be recognised, but in the meantime the few surviving old men

who, thirty-five years ago, were so ardent, so hopeful of the result of their work, have the only reward of which no Government can deprive them—that of the consciousness of duty done, and done to the uttermost of their power.

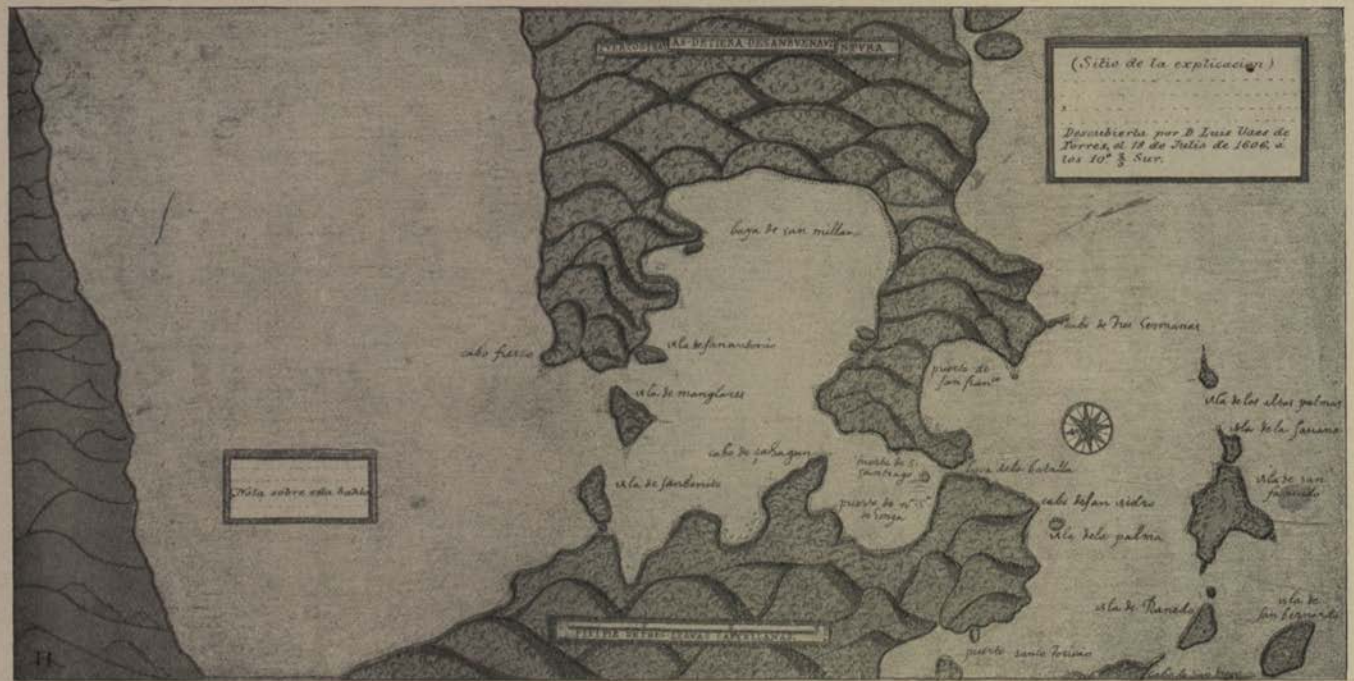
"All fulfilled the vision, we
Who watch and wait shall never see—
Who, in the morning of her race,
Toiled, fair or meanly, in our place."

BRET HARTE.


CHART OF
EAST NEW GUINEA



London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.
Engraved by Edwd Weller


(Sitio de la explicacion)
Descubierta por D. Luis Vaez de Torres, el 19 de Julio de 1606, a los 10° ⅔ Sur.
bahia de san millan
cabo fresco
isla de manglares
isla de sandonis
cabo de Tres Coronas
isla de los altos palmares
isla de la sarsana
isla de sandonis
cabo de palmas
isla de Ranalo
isla de san bernardo
puerto santo tomas

THE TORRES CHART OF SAN MILLAN BAY, 1606 (JENKINS' BAY OF H.M.S. "BASILISK").

Reduced from the facsimile published in the "Boletin de la Sociedad Geografica de Madrid."

At end; to face Torres chart map.

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